HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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**OFFICIAL REPORT**
**(HANSARD)**

## Tuesday, June 5, 2018
## (Part A)

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**Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Tuesday, June 5, 2018**

The House met at 10 a.m.

*Prayer*

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1005)

[*Translation*]

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to paragraph 90(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House the annual report of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner in relation to the Conflict of Interest Act for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

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[*English*]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 15 petitions.

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### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

LIAISON

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 107(3), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's eighth report from the liaison committee on committee activities and expenditures from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. This report highlights the work and accomplishments of each committee, as well as detailing the budgets that fund the activities approved by committee members.

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-407, an act to amend the Criminal Code (sentencing).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to introduce a bill that would reverse harmful effects brought on by the mandatory minimum sentencing. My thanks to the member for London—Fanshawe for seconding my bill.

The bill, proposed by two students from my riding, would answer the TRC's call to action number 32. It calls upon the federal government to amend the Criminal Code to allow trial judges, upon giving reasons, to depart from mandatory minimum sentences and restrictions on conditional sentences.

The rates of incarceration for indigenous people in Canada are a national disgrace. Canada's correctional investigator has stated that the over-incarceration of indigenous people is a human rights issue. My home province of Saskatchewan is incarcerating indigenous people at an increasing rate, when the rate of overall incarceration of non-aboriginal people is declining. The bill would allow judges to use their training and judgment to impose sentences that are reasonable, just, and based on the facts of each case, and that would not cause undue hardship.

I am extremely proud of Brody Beuker and Camilo Silva, of Bethlehem High School in Saskatoon West. I thank them for creating a better Canada.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

### PETITIONS

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is another of many petitions in my riding, from people who continue to express significant concerns regarding the attestation process in the Canada summer jobs program.

[*Translation*]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, they say the only constant is change, but when it comes to the high-frequency train, change is a very long time coming.

Thousands of people from Trois-Rivières have signed the petition urging the Minister of Transport to take action and make a decision about the high-frequency train proposal. I would like to read the last line of the petition, which I think is crystal clear:

> We, the undersigned, call on the Minister of Transport...to take the interests of the people of Trois-Rivières into account and invest in undertaking construction of the high-frequency train project in 2018.

I just want to point out that my constituents have been waiting 25 years for the passenger train to return.

[*English*]

ALGOMA PASSENGER TRAIN

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise again to table a petition to the Minister of Transport regarding passenger train service on the Algoma Central Railway. The petitioners are indicating the effects of train-related employment, the economic impact, and the lack of safe, reliable access, especially for small businesses. They indicate that a passenger train is more environmentally friendly, so it makes sense to put it back on track. They also indicate that it is important for regional health care and post-secondary education.

Petitioners are asking the government to put the train back on track, and to fulfill its mandate to serve the public interest through the promotion of a safe and secure, efficient, and environmentally responsible transportation system in Canada.

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL PARK IN BROME—MISSISQUOI

**Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, most of the land in southern Canada is essentially privately owned, which is why conservation tools are needed to integrate conservation and the responsible use of forests.

In the medium term, urban sprawl poses a real threat to our large, unique natural landscapes. That is why the petitioners are calling on the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to help us create a national park to protect and showcase Brome—Missisquoi's natural heritage for present and future generations.

● (1010)

PROTECTION OF GATINEAU PARK

**Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to present a petition initiated by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, or CPAWS, concerning the protection of Gatineau Park.

This petition, signed by people from Gatineau, Ottawa, Kanata, Chelsea, and Kingston, calls for legal protections for the park, which is not currently protected under the law and does not enjoy the same protections as other national parks in Canada. The petition calls on the government to pass legislation to recognize the park's boundaries and adopt policies that are appropriate to a nationally significant protected area, thereby preserving more than 90 plant species and 50 animal species at risk.

Gatineau Park is one of the most frequently visited parks in Canada, and the petitioners believe that we must act now to preserve it.

GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table in the House a petition signed by my constituents in Jonquière regarding automatic registration for the guaranteed income supplement. This is an important issue.

The government recently announced that starting now, all seniors 64 and older will be automatically registered for the guaranteed income supplement. What we want is for all eligible seniors to be registered upon reaching the age of 64. This is important not just to the people of my riding, but to everyone across Canada. The guaranteed income supplement helps seniors stay at home and receive appropriate services. That is why I have the honour to table in the House this petition signed by my constituents in Jonquière.

[*English*]

PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present this petition with respect to conscience protection. It states that coercion, intimidation, and other forms of pressure intended to force physicians, health care professionals, and health institutions to become parties to assisted suicide and euthanasia are a violation of their charter rights. The petitioners are calling on Parliament to enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience for physicians and health care institutions from coercion or intimidation to provide assisted suicide, euthanasia, or referral thereto.

CANADA POST

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions. My first petition is in support of postal banking. Nearly two million Canadians desperately need an alternative to payday lenders where there is no bank or credit union in the town. However, we know that 3,800 Canada Post outlets are already there and are quite capable of delivering the service, because they have the infrastructure to allow them to make a transition that would include postal banking.

Therefore, the petitioners are asking that the Government of Canada enact Motion No. 166 to create a committee to study and propose a plan for postal banking under the Canada Post Corporation.

SURVIVOR PENSION BENEFITS

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is in support of Bill C-397. As members may recall, there is an archaic piece of legislation on the books that precludes a dying spouse from leaving his or her pension to his or her spouse if he or she is a member of Parliament, a judge, a veteran, or a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the marriage was entered into after age 60. That is ludicrous, because the caregivers and spouses of these veterans or Royal Canadian Mounted Police give so much in terms of love and care.

Therefore, the petitioners are calling on the government to support my bill, which would enable cancellation of the legislation that denies surviving spouses their rightful pensions.

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present.

The first relates to the abuse of Gulf Islands anchorages, and it is being presented for the first time.

To summarize, earlier this year, Transport Canada put in place an interim protocol for the use of southern British Columbia anchorages. What this has, in effect, done is to say that the default decision is to send really large container ships into the pristine waters of the Gulf Islands, through my riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands and up to the riding of the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. Even when there are open berths available in Victoria, Vancouver, and Nanaimo, these freighters are moved into the Gulf Islands. These anchorages are essentially free parking lots for an industrial enterprise in a pristine environment. It is unacceptable.

The petitioners are asking the House of Commons to call on the Government of Canada to urgently protect the Gulf Islands' environment and economy, suspend this interim protocol for the use of southern B.C. anchorages immediately, and consult further on a new protocol, so that our environment in and around the Gulf Islands will not be abused and threatened in this way.

● (1015)

Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from residents throughout southern Gulf Islands.

The petitioners call upon the government to ban the transport of crude oil, particularly dilbit, in tankers along the entire B.C. coast, to protect fisheries, tourism, coastal communities, and natural ecosystems.

PHARMACARE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have many constituents who have brought forward this petition.

The petitioners call upon the federal government to develop jointly with its provincial and territorial partners the universal, single-payer, evidence-based, and sustainable public drug plan with purchasing power to secure best available pricing, beginning with the list of essential medicines addressing priority health needs and expanding to a comprehensive permanent plan that would promote the health and well-being of all Canadians.

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today on World Environment Day, when the global community is committed to beating plastic pollution, to table a petition to support my Motion No. 151 calling for a national strategy to combat plastic pollution from entering our waterways.

The petitioners are from Vancouver Island, from communities like Tofino, Parksville, and Qualicum Beach. They are calling on the government to regulate single-use plastics and to come up with strategies to mitigate plastic from entering our waterways, through stormwater outfalls and education and beach clean-up campaigns. They want to make sure there is producer responsibility, and to redesign the whole plastic economy.

The petition supports seven reforms to address plastic pollution.

*Routine Proceedings*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following question will be answered today: Question No. 1669.

[*Text*]

Question No. 1669—**Mr. David Anderson**:

With regard to Bill C-71, An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, and the government's claim that over 90 % of all authorizations to transport restricted and prohibited weapons are between the owner's residence and an approved shooting range, or between the retailer and the owner's home directly following the purchase of a firearm: what is the source of this claim and what information does the government have to substantiate this claim?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, under the authority of the chief firearms officers, an authorization to transport is issued for the movement, or transport, of restricted and prohibited firearms. The application for an authorization to transport requires the client, the licencee, to indicate the reason for transport, which the chief firearms officer of jurisdiction will approve or refuse.

Since December 1, 1998, with the coming into force of the Firearms Act, all authorizations to transport that have been issued—i.e., approved—are retained within the Canadian Firearms Information System.

An analysis on all valid authorizations to transport as of August 1, 2015, established that 138,184, or 96.5%, of the 143,177 valid authorizations to transport were issued for one of two reasons for transport: first, transport of restricted firearms and/or prohibited handguns designated 12(6.1), possessed for the purpose of target practice, to and from all shooting clubs and ranges approved under section 29 of the Firearms Act; second, transport of a newly acquired restricted firearm and/or prohibited firearm from the place of acquisition to the place of registration.

On September 2, 2015, the legislative process for authorizations to transport was altered as a result of Bill C-42, whereby six transportation provisions for restricted and prohibited firearms would now be a condition on a firearms licence as opposed to through an authorization to transport.

Under a Bill C-71 regime, the two transportation provisions noted above would continue to be a condition on a firearms licence.

[*English*]

## QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1660 to 1668 and 1670 could be made orders for return, these returns would also be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*Text*]

Question No. 1660— **Ms. Jenny Kwan**:

With regard to the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) (2006), which came into force in August 2013: (*a*) what is the yearly breakdown of ships docking in Canadian waters, broken down by (i) type of ship, (ii) flag state of the ship; (*b*) for ships that spend more than 30 days in Canadian waters, (i) how many have conducted labour market impact assessments (LMIA), (ii) how many are known to have avoided conducting an LMIA by exiting and re-entering Canadian waters, (iii) how many Canadian workers are employed on board, (iv) how many temporary foreign workers are employed on board; (*c*) for ships docking in Canadian waters, how many of these ships were inspected through port state control, broken down by (i) the agency or department that inspected the ships, (ii) the exact nature of the inspection, (iii) the outcome of the inspection, (iv) the consequences applied if inspection results did not comply with international maritime law and national labour conventions, (v) the compliance rates to MLC 2006 and national labour conventions, (vi) the amount of ships that have been found in violation of maritime and labour laws more than once over the past five years; (*d*) what is the yearly amount of active employees conducting inspections through port-state control, broken down by (i) type of training provided to all inspectors tasked with carrying out inspections through port state control, (ii) length of training provided to all inspectors tasked with carrying out inspections through port state control, (iii) which department they fall under, (iv) department in charge of their training, (v) amount of inspectors hired to inspect ships in Canada outside of port state control, (vi) nature of the inspections they conduct, (vii) organizations or agencies they belong to, (viii) type of training they receive; (*e*) what are the enforcement mechanisms at the disposition of the government and individual inspectors, including (i) rates at which these enforcement mechanisms are used or applied, (ii) effectiveness in deterring ship owners from breaking the law; (*f*) what is the comprehensive list of budget measures that pertain to enforcement of maritime law, including (i) those that cater specifically to the employment of temporary foreign workers, (ii) those that cater specifically to the hiring and training of inspectors; (*g*) what are the organizations that Transport Canada recognizes as being allowed to conduct inspections on ships in Canada, including (i) NGOs, (ii) unions; (*h*) when employment of temporary foreign workers on ships is known, (i) what is the average wage received daily, (ii) what is the average wage received monthly, (iii) what is the average wage received yearly, (iv) what is the average length of their contract; (i) according to data accumulated from inspections or from other sources, how much is owed to (i) temporary foreign workers, (ii) Canadian workers in unpaid wages for the past five years; (*j*) according to data accumulated from inspections and from other sources, how many ships that dock in Canadian waters (i) do not feed their workers adequately, (ii) do not pay their workers adequately, (iii) do not provide their workers with adequate safety and security standards in their environment; (*k*) based on the inspections that are made into working conditions on ships, how many are made (i) based on complaint or call placed by a temporary foreign worker on board, (ii) based on a complaint or call placed by a Canadian worker on board, (iii) routinely; (*l*) how many lawsuits have been filed by the Seafarers' International Union of Canada against the government over the past twelve years, including (i) the nature of the lawsuit, (ii) the outcome of the lawsuit; (*m*) how many lawsuits have been filed against the government by any other party over the past twelve years with regards to the treatment of workers on ships; (*n*) how many of the lawsuits in (l) and (m) separately have led to (i) legislative reform, (ii) investment in enforcement mechanisms, (iii) reform of enforcement mechanisms and in what way; (*o*) how many of the lawsuits in (*l*) and (*m*) separately dealt with a complaint or injustice of the same nature; (*p*) what are the government's primary means of implementing MLC 2006; and (*q*) which department is responsible for infractions of MLC 2006 (i) on Canadian flag ships, (ii) in Canadian waters, (iii) on ships with Canadian workers?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1661—**Mr. Tom Kmiec**:

With regard to Health Canada's Special Access Program (SAP) that considers requests for access to drugs that are otherwise unavailable to Canadians from medical practitioners to treat serious or life-threatening conditions: (*a*) what is the aggregate number of applications that have been received by the SAP in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years; (*b*) of all SAP applications received in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years, what is the number of repeat applications for the same drug or health product; (*c*) for drugs that have received multiple requests in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years, what are the drug names and the number of requests they have each received; (*d*) what is the total number of SAP applications that have been approved in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years; (*e*) what is the total number of SAP applications that have been rejected in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years; (*f*) what are the alphabetized names of all drugs and health products that have been approved by the SAP program in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years; (*g*) what are the alphabetized names of all drugs and health products that have been rejected by the SAP program in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years; (*h*) how many times has the procedures manual that assessors refer to in administration of the SAP been updated and what are these updates for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years; (*i*) what are the measures undertaken by Health Canada to ensure its workers have a good understanding of the medical conditions they're reviewing as part of SAP applications; and (*j*) what is the aggregate cost of administering the SAP to the Government of Canada for the 2016 fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1662—**Mr. Ted Falk**:

With regard to the decision taken by the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour to apply an attestation requirement to the Canada Summer Jobs program: (*a*) how many applications were received in total; (*b*) of the number identified in (*a*), how many applications were deemed incomplete; (*c*) how many completed applications included a letter of concern from the applicant; (*d*) of those identified in (*c*), how many were (i) approved, (ii) denied or rejected; (*e*) for each of those identified in (*d*)(ii), what rationale was given for denial; (*f*) in the province of Manitoba, how many applications did Service Canada receive, broken down by riding; (*g*) of those identified in (*f*), how many were denied or rejected due to a failure to sign the attestation, broken down by riding; (*h*) how many applicants in Manitoba were requested to re-submit their application, due to a failure to sign the attestation, broken down by riding; (*i*) of those identified in (*f*), how many applicants resubmitted their application, broken down by riding; and (*j*) how many of the applicants identified in (*i*) were awarded funding, broken down by riding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1663— **Mr. Peter Kent**:

With regard to the event featuring Palestinian Authority Archbishop Atallah Hannah in April 2018, in which the Member of Parliament for Mississauga-Erin Mills provided greetings on behalf of the Prime Minister: (*a*) did the Prime Minister authorize the greetings; (*b*) does the Minister of Foreign Affairs agree with the statement given at the event on behalf of the Prime Minister; and (*c*) if the Member was not speaking on behalf of the Prime Minister or was not authorized to provide the greetings, what disciplinary action or corrective measure has the government taken?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1664—**Mr. Jamie Schmale**:

With regard to government expenditures with News Canada Inc., since January 1, 2016, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity: (*a*) what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) duration, (iv) description of goods or services provided, (v) titles of "news" stories disseminated as a result of the expenditure; (*b*) have any departments, agencies, Crown corporations or other government entities discontinued their relationship with News Canada Inc. as a result of the Minister of Canadian Heritage's January 23, 2017, tweet regarding "fake news"; and (*c*) will the government commit to ensuring that any unattributed stories written by the government are clearly marked as government propaganda in the story and, if not, why not?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1665—**Mr. Dave MacKenzie**:

With regard to expenditures made by the government since December 11, 2017, under government-wide object code 3259 (Miscellaneous expenditures not Elsewhere Classified): what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) vendor name, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) description of goods or services provided, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1666— **Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy**:

With regard to federal spending in the constituency of Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot in the fiscal year 2017-2018: what grants, loans, contributions and contracts were awarded by the government, broken down by (i) department and agency, (ii) municipality, (iii) name of recipient, (iv) amount received, (v) program under which expenditure was allocated, (vi) date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1667— **Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy**:

With regard to the government's infrastructure plan of $186.7 billion over 12 years: (*a*) what amounts have been allocated, to date, to the various infrastructure projects, broken down by (i) amount allocated to each infrastructure project, (ii) project type; (*b*) what are the government's infrastructure funding criteria; (*c*) what are the locations, to date, where government infrastructure investments have been made, broken down by (i) city or municipality, (ii) amount allocated by city or municipality, (iii) infrastructure project type; (*d*) how much will be spent on infrastructure in the coming years by the government, broken down by (i) year, (ii) province, (*e*) how many infrastructure applications have been received by the government since the creation of the infrastructure plan, broken down by (i) number of applications received, (ii) applications approved by the government, (iii) applications rejected, (iv) expected payment date for each government-approved application; (*f*) why is the minister unable to say what part of infrastructure funding was allocated in budget 2015, 2016 or 2017; (*g*) what specific steps will the government take to ensure better data sharing with the parliamentary budget officer; (*h*) when will the government provide more information on the infrastructure plan; (*i*) have the GDP projections resulting from infrastructure expenditure been adjusted and, if so, what are they; (*j*) for phase two, (i) what is the government's deadline for signing agreements with all the provinces and territories, (ii) what are the reasons for missing the March 2018 deadline; and (*k*) has the department identified any other possible delays and, if so, (i) what part of the funding will be delayed, (ii) what are the causes, (iii) has a plan to address these delays been developed in response?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1668—**Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy**:

With regard to Employment and Social Development Canada and the Social Security Tribunal: (*a*) how many appeals are currently waiting to be heard at the Income Security Section (ISS), in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension Plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*b*) how many appeals have been heard by the ISS in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*c*) how many appeals heard by the ISS were allowed in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*d*) how many appeals heard by the ISS were dismissed in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*e*) how many appeals to the ISS were summarily dismissed in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*f*) how many appeals at the ISS have been heard in person in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*g*) how many appeals at the ISS have been heard by teleconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*h*) how many appeals at the ISS have been heard by videoconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*i*) how many appeals at the ISS have been heard in writing in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*j*) how many members hired in the Employment Insurance Section (EIS) are currently assigned to the ISS; (*k*) how many income security appeals are currently waiting to be heard by the Appeal Division (AD), in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*l*) how many income security appeals have been heard by the AD in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*m*) how many income security appeals heard by the AD were allowed in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*n*) how many income security appeals heard by the AD were dismissed in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*o*) how many income security appeals to the AD were summarily dismissed in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by (i) Canada Pension plan retirement pensions and survivors benefits, (ii) Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, (iii) Old Age Security; (*p*) how many income security appeals at the AD have been heard in person in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*q*) how many income security appeals at the AD have been heard in by videoconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*r*) how many income security appeals at the AD have been heard by teleconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*s*) how many income security appeals at the AD have been heard in writing in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*t*) how many appeals are currently waiting to be heard at the Employment Insurance Section (EIS); (*u*) how many appeals have been heard by the EIS in 2016-2017, in total and broken down by month; (*v*) how many appeals heard by the EIS were allowed in 2016-2017; (*w*) how many appeals heard by the EIS were dismissed in 2016-2017; (*x*) how many appeals to the EIS were summarily dismissed in 2016-2017; (*y*) how many appeals at the EIS have been heard in person 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*z*) how many appeals at the EIS have been heard by videoconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*aa*) how many appeals at the EIS have been heard by teleconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*bb*) how many appeals at the EIS have been heard in writing in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*cc*) how many EI appeals are currently waiting to be heard by the AD; (*dd*) how many EI appeals have been heard by the AD in 2016-2017; (*ee*) how many EI appeals heard by the AD were allowed in 2016-2017; (*ff*) how many EI appeals heard by the AD were dismissed in 2016-2017; (*gg*) how many EI appeals to the AD were summarily dismissed in 2016-2017; (*hh*) how many EI appeals at the AD have been heard in person in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*ii*) how many EI appeals at the AD have been heard by videoconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*jj*) how many EI appeals at the AD have been heard by teleconference in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*kk*) how many EI appeals at the AD have been heard in writing in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) appeals allowed, (ii) appeals dismissed; (*ll*) how many legacy appeals are currently waiting to be heard at the ISS; (*mm*) how many legacy appeals are currently waiting to be heard at the EIS; (*nn*) how many legacy income security appeals are currently waiting to be heard at the AD; (*oo*) how many legacy Employment Insurance appeals are currently waiting to be heard at the AD; (*pp*) how many requests has the Tribunal received for an expedited hearing due to terminal illness in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) month, (ii) requests granted, (iii) requests not granted; (*qq*) how many requests has the Tribunal received for an expedited hearing due to financial hardship in 2016-2017, broken down by (i) month, (ii) section, (iii) requests granted, (iv) requests not granted; (*rr*) when will performance standards for the Tribunal be put in place; (*ss*) how many casefiles have been reviewed by the special unit created within the department to review backlogged social security appeals; (*tt*) how many settlements have been offered; (*uu*) how many settlements have been accepted; (*vv*) how much has been spent on the special unit within the department; (*ww*) what is the expected end date for the special unit within the department; (*xx*) for 2016 and 2017, what is the average amount of time for the Department to reach a decision on an application for Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits, broken down by month; and (*yy*) for 2016 and 2017, what is the average amount of time for the Department to reach a decision on a reconsideration of an application for Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits, broken down by month?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1670—**Mr. Luc Thériault**:

With regard to the $173.2 million announced on page 211 of the budget plan to support security operations at the Canada-U.S. border and the processing of asylum claimants arriving in 2018-2019: (*a*) what is the breakdown of this amount by department, program and province, both financially, expressed in dollars, and in human resources, expressed in full-time equivalents; and (*b*) to determine that this amount can meet demand, what is the number of migrants that the government expects to be crossing the Canada-U.S. border in 2018-2019 and what is the breakdown by province?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

# GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-69, an act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

[*English*]

SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** There are 216 motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-69.

[*Translation*]

Motions Nos. 2, 6, 7, and 80 will not be selected by the Chair, since they could have been submitted to the committee for its consideration. Motions Nos. 14, 24, and 65 will not be selected by the Chair, since they were defeated in committee.

[*English*]

All remaining motions have been examined, and the Chair is satisfied that they meet the guidelines expressed in the note to Standing Order 76.1(5) regarding the selection of motions in amendment at report stage.

Motions Nos. 1, 3 to 5, 8 to 13, 15 to 23, 25 to 64, 66 to 79, and 81 to 216 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

● (1020)

[*Translation*]

I will now put Motions Nos. 1, 3 to 5, 8 to 13, 15 to 23, 25 to 64, 66 to 79, and 81 to 216 to the House.

[*English*]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC)** moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 1.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP)** , seconded by the hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, moved:

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 20 on page 28 with the following:

"(d) any impact that the designated project"

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 22 on page 28 with the following:

"Canada recognized and affirmed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted on September 13, 2007, and by section 35 of the"

[*English*]

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing lines 32 and 33 on page 34 with the following:

"ter and only one member of the review panel may be appointed from the roster."

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 8

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 27 on page 45 with the following:

"tion, direction or approval issued, granted or given, as the case may be, by a federal authority other than the Agency."

Motion No. 9

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 22 on page 46 with the following:

"provided by the proponent, the public or the Indigenous peoples of Canada on the matter, establish the"

Motion No. 10

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 26 on page 46 with the following:

"vided by the proponent, the public or the Indigenous peoples of Canada on the matter, extend the period"

[*English*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP)** , seconded by the hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, moved:

Motion No. 11

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 28 on page 55 with the following:

"assessment, as well as any assessment of the effects of past physical activities, of alternative means of carrying out the physical activities and of options for the protection of the environment, human life or health or public safety."

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 12

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 28 on page 55 with the following:

"assessment, as well as any treaty rights of the Indigenous peoples of Canada, their rights under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted on September 13, 2007, and any cumulative impacts associated with other projects or activities."

Motion No. 13

That Bill C-69, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 30 on page 56 with the following:

"account the rights of the Indigenous peoples of Canada, including the rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 and their rights under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted on September 13, 2007, and used any Indigenous knowledge provided"

● (1025)

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC)** moved:

Motion No. 15

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 2.

Motion No. 16

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 3.

Motion No. 17

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 4.

Motion No. 18

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 5.

Motion No. 19

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 6.

Motion No. 20

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 7.

Motion No. 21

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 8.

Motion No. 22

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 9.

Motion No. 23

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 10.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP)**, seconded by the hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, moved:

Motion No. 25

That Bill C-69, in Clause 10, be amended by replacing line 22 on page 105 with the following:

"protection of the rights of the Indigenous peoples of Canada."

Motion No. 26

That Bill C-69, in Clause 10, be amended by replacing line 34 on page 174 with the following:

"nitments in respect of climate change, the environment and biodiversity;"

Motion No. 27

That Bill C-69, in Clause 10, be amended by replacing line 34 on page 207 with the following:

"commitments in respect of climate change, the environment and biodiversity; and"

[*English*]

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC)** moved:

Motion No. 28

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 11.

Motion No. 29

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 12.

Motion No. 30

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 13.

Motion No. 31

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 14.

Motion No. 32

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 15.

Motion No. 33

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 16.

Motion No. 34

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 17.

Motion No. 35

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 18.

Motion No. 36

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 19.

Motion No. 37

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 20.

Motion No. 38

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 21.

Motion No. 39

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 22.

Motion No. 40

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 23.

Motion No. 41

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 24.

Motion No. 42

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 25.

Motion No. 43

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 26.

Motion No. 44

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 27.

Motion No. 45

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 28.

Motion No. 46

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 29.

Motion No. 47

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 30.

Motion No. 48

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 31.

Motion No. 49

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 32.

Motion No. 50

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 33.

Motion No. 51

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 34.

Motion No. 52

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 35.

Motion No. 53

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 36.

Motion No. 54

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 37.

Motion No. 55

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 38.

Motion No. 56

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 39.

Motion No. 57

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 40.

Motion No. 58

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 41.

Motion No. 59

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 42.

Motion No. 60

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 43.

Motion No. 61

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 44.

Motion No. 62

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 45.

Motion No. 63

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 46.

Motion No. 64

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 47.

Motion No. 66

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 48.

Motion No. 67

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 49.

Motion No. 68

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 50.

Motion No. 69

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 51.

Motion No. 70

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 52.

Motion No. 71

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 53.

Motion No. 72

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 54.

Motion No. 73

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 55.

Motion No. 74

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 56.

Motion No. 75

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 57.

Motion No. 76

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 58.

Motion No. 77

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 59.

Motion No. 78

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 60.

Motion No. 79

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 61.

Motion No. 81

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 62.

Motion No. 82

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 63.

Motion No. 83

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 64.

Motion No. 84

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 65.

Motion No. 85

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 66.

Motion No. 86

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 67.

Motion No. 87

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 68.

Motion No. 88

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 69.

Motion No. 89

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 70.

Motion No. 90

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 71.

Motion No. 91

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 72.

Motion No. 92

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 73.

Motion No. 93

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 74.

Motion No. 94

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 75.

Motion No. 95

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 76.

Motion No. 96

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 77.

Motion No. 97

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 78.

Motion No. 98

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 79.

Motion No. 99

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 80.

Motion No. 100

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 81.

Motion No. 101

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 82.

Motion No. 102

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 83.

Motion No. 103

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 84.

Motion No. 104

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 85.

Motion No. 105

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 86.

Motion No. 106

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 87.

Motion No. 107

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 88.

Motion No. 108

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 89.

Motion No. 109

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 90.

Motion No. 110

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 91.

Motion No. 111

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 92.

Motion No. 112

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 93.

Motion No. 113

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 94.

Motion No. 114

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 95.

Motion No. 115

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 96.

Motion No. 116

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 97.

Motion No. 117

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 98.

Motion No. 118

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 99.

Motion No. 119

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 100.

Motion No. 120

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 101.

Motion No. 121

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 102.

Motion No. 122

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 103.

Motion No. 123

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 104.

Motion No. 124

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 105.

Motion No. 125

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 106.

Motion No. 126

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 107.

Motion No. 127

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 108.

Motion No. 128

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 109.

Motion No. 129

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 110.

Motion No. 130

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 111.

Motion No. 131

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 112.

Motion No. 132

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 113.

Motion No. 133

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 114.

Motion No. 134

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 115.

Motion No. 135

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 116.

Motion No. 136

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 117.

Motion No. 137

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 118.

Motion No. 138

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 119.

Motion No. 139

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 120.

Motion No. 140

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 121.

Motion No. 141

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 122.

Motion No. 142

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 123.

Motion No. 143

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 124.

Motion No. 144

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 125.

Motion No. 145

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 126.

Motion No. 146

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 127.

Motion No. 147

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 128.

● (1045)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 148

That Bill C-69, in Clause 128, be amended by replacing line 24 on page 328 with the following:

"5.002 The Canadian Energy Regulator shall establish a"

[*English*]

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC)** moved:

Motion No. 149

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 129.

Motion No. 150

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 130.

Motion No. 151

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 131.

Motion No. 152

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 132.

Motion No. 153

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 133.

Motion No. 154

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 134.

Motion No. 155

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 135.

Motion No. 156

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 136.

Motion No. 157

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 137.

Motion No. 158

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 138.

Motion No. 159

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 139.

Motion No. 160

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 140.

Motion No. 161

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 141.

Motion No. 162

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 142.

Motion No. 163

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 143.

Motion No. 164

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 144.

Motion No. 165

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 145.

Motion No. 166

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 146.

Motion No. 167

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 147.

Motion No. 168

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 148.

Motion No. 169

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 149.

Motion No. 170

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 150.

Motion No. 171

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 151.

Motion No. 172

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 152.

Motion No. 173

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 153.

Motion No. 174

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 154.

Motion No. 175

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 155.

Motion No. 176

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 156.

Motion No. 177

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 157.

Motion No. 178

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 158.

Motion No. 179

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 159.

Motion No. 180

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 160.

Motion No. 181

That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 161.

Motion No. 182
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 162.
Motion No. 183
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 163.
Motion No. 184
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 164.
Motion No. 185
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 165.
Motion No. 186
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 166.
Motion No. 187
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 167.
Motion No. 188
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 168.
Motion No. 189
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 169.
Motion No. 190
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Motion No. 192
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 172.
Motion No. 193
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 173.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 174.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 176.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 180.
Motion No. 201
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 181.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 182.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 183.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 184.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 185.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 186.
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That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 187.
Motion No. 208
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 188.
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Motion No. 210
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Motion No. 211
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 191.
Motion No. 212
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 192.
Motion No. 213
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 193.
Motion No. 214
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 194.
Motion No. 215
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 195.
Motion No. 216
That Bill C-69 be amended by deleting Clause 196.

● (1035)

She said: Madam Speaker, on behalf of Lakeland and communities in every corner of Canada, I strongly oppose Bill C-69, which would radically overhaul Canada's regulatory system, and by extension, hurt Canada's responsible natural resources development.

It is rich for the Liberals to talk about transparency and for their mandate letters to instruct meaningful engagement with opposition members while they ram through legislation with this magnitude of impact on the Canadian economy. The Liberals refused to split this massive omnibus bill, which involves three big ministries; denied all but a handful of the literally hundreds of amendments proposed by members of all opposition parties; introduced 120 of their own amendments at the last minute; did not provide timely briefings or supplementary material to MPs; and ultimately ignored all the recommendations in the two expert panel reports, from months and months of consultation, rumoured to cost a million dollars each. They shut down debate in committee and are pushing the bill through the last stages with procedural tools.

Bill C-69 would make it even harder for Canada to compete globally. More than $100 billion in energy investment has already left Canada under the Liberals. Foreign capital is leaving Canada across all sectors.

The government should focus on market access, on streamlining regulations, and on cutting red tape and taxes in Canada, especially because the U.S. is Canada's biggest energy competitor and customer. However, the Liberals are layering on additional regulatory burdens and costs that make it more difficult for Canada's private sector to compete. The Liberals are damaging certainty and confidence in Canada, putting our own country at a disadvantage.

Bill C-69, without a doubt, compounds red tape and costs in natural resources development. During testimony, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers said:

> Unfortunately, today Canada is attracting more uncertainty, not more capital, and we will continue to lose investment and jobs if we do not have a system of clear rules and decisions that are final and can be relied upon.

Unfortunately, CAPP and the investment community today see very little in Bill C-69 that would improve that status.

CAPP went on:

> We see substantial risk that all the work undertaken today could be deemed incomplete. Therefore, they may have to restart and follow an entirely different process, which would add more time and more uncertainty for our investment community.

That issue was addressed in committee by amendments giving proponents the option for reassessment. What I worry about is that the Liberals have now given anti-energy activists the opportunity to demand that all projects go back through that new process, because they have spent years denigrating Canada's regulatory reputation. It has already begun. The Liberals have created years of a regulatory vacuum, destabilizing the framework for Canada's responsible resource development, and have added hurdles during an already challenging time, the worst time, for prices, costs, and competitiveness. That has caused the biggest decline in Canadian oil and gas investment of any other two-year period since 1947, and hundreds of thousands of Canadians losing their jobs. This year alone, during three-year price highs, Canadian oil and gas investment is projected to drop 47% from 2016 levels. The Bank of Canada says that there will be zero new energy investment in Canada after next year.

In committee, the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association said:

> In the two years leading up to this bill, you can pick your poison: policies, including a tanker moratorium...; proposed methane emission regulation reductions; clean fuel standards; provincial GHG emission regulation; B.C.'s restrictions on transporting bitumen; a lack of clarity regarding the government's position on the implementation of UNDRIP and FPIC; and the fairer competition from energy-supportive policies in the United States, etc. The cumulative effect of these policies has significantly weakened investor confidence in Canada. It is seriously challenging the energy sector's ability to be competitive.

Nancy Southern, the CEO of ATCO said "our competitive edge is slipping away from us. ...it's layer upon layer [of regulatory burden]. It's increasing regulatory requirement, it's compliance, new labour laws, it's taxes—carbon tax".

She called it "heartbreaking".

What is really galling is that it makes neither economic nor environmental sense to harm Canada's ability to produce oil and gas. The IEA says that 69% of the world's oil demand growth was in the Asia-Pacific in the past five years, and global demand will grow exponentially for decades to come. Therefore, the world will keep needing oil and gas, and other countries will keep producing it, but of course, to no where near the environmental or social standards of Canadian energy.

Right now, Canada has more oil supply that it does pipeline capacity, but if Canada had more pipelines, to both the United States and other international markets, Canada could capitalize on its almost limitless potential to be a global supplier of the most responsible oil to the world.

Building new pipelines makes sense, but as if the Liberals have not already done enough damage, Bill C-69 would make it even harder for new major energy infrastructure to be approved. It is based more on ideology and politics than on science, evidence, and economic analysis.

● (1100)

The Canadian Energy Pipeline Association said:

> ...it is preposterous to expect that a pipeline proponent would spend upwards of a billion dollars only to be denied approval because the project must account for emissions from production of the product to consumption in another part of the world. If the goal is to curtail oil and gas production and to have no more pipelines built, this legislation has hit the mark.

Oil and gas proponents are saying clearly that Bill C-69 would ensure that no future major energy projects will be built in Canada.

The Liberals claim that this bill would enhance indigenous participation. In fact, it actually would make no substantive changes to indigenous rights or duties in the approval process. Indigenous people and communities and all directly impacted communities must be consulted on major energy projects. That is the crown's duty. However, this bill plays right into the hands of anti-energy activists. It would allow distant, unaffected communities, even non-Canadians, to interfere in the review process by removing the standing test and would allow anti-energy groups to subvert the aspirations of indigenous communities that want energy and economic development.

A hallmark of both Canada's regulatory system and Canadian oil and gas developers has long been world-leading best practices for indigenous consultation and the incorporation of traditional knowledge. Canada's energy sector is more committed to partnerships, mutual benefit agreements, and ownership with indigenous people than anywhere else in the world, so shutting down Canadian oil and gas will hurt them, too. However, the Liberals say one thing and do another when it comes to indigenous people and energy development. The tanker ban was imposed without any meaningful consultation whatsoever with directly impacted communities, such as the Lax Kw'alaams Band, which is taking the government to court over it.

The tanker ban is also the main obstacle to the Eagle Spirit pipeline, which would run from Bruderheim in Lakeland to northern B.C., carrying oil for export. After five years of work, this $16-billion project has been called the biggest indigenous-owned endeavour in the world. Thirty-five first nations, every single one along the route, support it. The Prime Minister ordered the tanker ban less than a month after the last election, with no consultation or comprehensive economic, environmental, or safety analysis and no consultation with indigenous communities impacted by it. Just like the northern gateway pipeline, 31 first nations supported it, and indigenous partners had equity worth $2 billion. The Prime Minister could have ordered added scope and time for more consultation, but he vetoed it entirely, so both dozens of indigenous agreements and the only already-approved, new, stand-alone pipeline to export Canadian oil to the Asia Pacific are gone.

The Prime Minister did the same thing to the Northwest Territories when he unilaterally imposed a five-year offshore drilling ban, with no notice to the territorial government, despite intergovernmental discussions. Northwest Territories Premier Bob McLeod said, "I think for a lot of people, the prime minister took away hope from ever being able to make a long-term healthy living in the North". This bill is part of the Liberals' pattern of enabling themselves to make political decisions about energy development in Canada.

This bill is bad for investor confidence in Canada, it is bad for the energy sector, it is bad for the economy, and it is bad for the country as a whole. On top of ideologically driven political decisions, it would not establish timelines for certainty either, despite Liberal claims. There are multiple ways either ministers or the commissioner could stop and extend the process as long as they wanted, as many times as they wanted.

This bill would not harm only Canadian oil and gas. The Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada said, "the Canadian mineral industry faces fierce global competition for investment. In fact, Canada is starting to fall behind its competitors in a number of areas, indicating its decline in attractiveness as a destination for mineral investment."

That is a major problem for Canada too, as Australia and South Africa compete directly as destinations of choice for mineral investment, exploration, and mining. Like oil and gas, Canadian mining is a world leader on all measures. The sector is the biggest employer of indigenous people. It is often the only opportunity for jobs in remote and northern regions. Any additional hurdles or costs will tip the scale in favour of other countries.

The Liberals' decisions have provoked even former Liberal MP and premier of Quebec Jean Charest to say, "Canada is a country that can't get its big projects done. That's the impression that is out there in the world right now".

Although the Liberals should put Canada first, they jeopardize Canada's ability to compete, forcing Canada into a position where natural resources development, the main driver of middle-class jobs and Canada's high standard of living, is at serious risk.

The Liberals should champion Canada's expertise, innovation, and regulatory know-how. They should be proud of Canada's track record instead of constantly attacking Canada's regulatory reputation and imposing policies and laws like Bill C-69, which would damage the future of Canada's responsible natural resources development and put very real limits on Canada's whole economy and opportunities for future generations.

● (1105)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, when I make an overall assessment of the bill, Bill C-69 is long overdue. It makes a lot of positive changes. The best way I could summarize this legislation, which the official opposition has put forward so many amendments for, is to say that we should be looking at what it would really do. It would protect our environment, fish, and waterways; it would rebuild public trust and respect for indigenous rights; and it would strengthen our economy.

We need to recognize that the environment and the economy go hand in hand. This is something that the former Harper government failed to do, but we are doing. The best example of that is the pipeline that will go through. For 10 years, Harper failed with that. This government is moving forward with protecting our environment, consulting with indigenous people and others, and advancing the economy with thousands of jobs. Why does the Conservative Party continue to believe that when it comes to development in Canada, it has to be one-sided?

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:** Madam Speaker, the Liberals need to stop attacking Canada's reputation. Canada has always been the most environmentally responsible producer of natural resources for the benefit of every community in this country and in providing for the world's needs. I hope that one day the Liberals will also let go of the myth they are spinning about the record of pipelines being built in Canada. Under the former Conservative government, four pipelines were constructed without a cent of taxpayer dollars, and they were built to the highest standards through the most rigorous regulatory process in the world. These Liberals have actually killed the only two opportunities for stand-alone pipelines to export to the Asia Pacific, and they have just spent $4.5 billion tax dollars to give to a company that will now build pipelines in the U.S., and there is no certainty about the expansion of the old pipeline at all.

Oil and gas and natural resources developers are throwing up red flags about the risks with this bill. Siegfried Kiefer from ATCO warns that governments in Canada "are busy" bringing in "multiple and compounding policies and regulations" that are "layering considerable costs on businesses and individuals alike, undermining the confidence of investors, eroding the attractiveness of our industries and weakening the confidence of the public."

That means the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Canadians are at risk because of these Liberals.

● (1110)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I still think the hon. member for Lakeland should be the hon. member for Vegreville, given her passionate defence of her community.

We were willing to give this bill a chance. We did vote in favour of it at second reading. However, every single one of our amendments at committee was rejected by the Liberals, and the Liberals are trying to ram this bill through as quickly as possible. Given that, I would like the member to comment on this as a pattern with the Liberal government.

The Liberals are masters of the long promise when it comes to justice reform, electoral reform, and now the environmental review process, yet it all seems to be done at the last minute in a very rushed process. I would like to hear the member's comments on that in the scope of this bill and whether or not it is following that exact same pattern.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments about fighting for Vegreville, and I thank the NDP in joining me on that fight, including the support of every single Conservative member in here.

I completely agree that it is galling the way the Liberals say one thing and then do another. That started from the very beginning of this bill. Opposition parties were denied a technical briefing at the same time the government provided that briefing to media and stakeholders. Over and over again, the Liberals shut down debate in committee and now they are ramming through the final stages of this bill. I know that while we all have a variety of views, all opposition members worked in good faith to try to improve this bill from our various perspectives. I know this frustrated my colleague from the NDP at committee to such a degree that she is now questioning her future involvement in the committee because of the way the Liberals ignored and rejected hundreds of amendments by opposition members.

So much for all their talk about making Parliament a meaningful way to engage members on behalf of all Canadians right across the country. This is total baloney from these Liberals all the time.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to speak of a really terrible tragedy, which is the destruction of environmental law in this country, how it was done in 2012, and how the current government, despite promises, has failed to repair the damage. I do not enjoy watching a government make mistakes, even if they cost them it in the next election. I do not enjoy saying that the Prime Minister made a promise and now has broken another promise.

It is tragic because we could do better and we used to do better. I will briefly cover the history of environmental assessment in this country and why this bill is not acceptable as it currently stands. It could be made acceptable by accepting a lot of the amendments, particularly those put forward by the member for Edmonton Strathcona and by me. This bill is an omnibus bill that attempts to repair the damage, but first let us look at what was damaged.

Starting back in the early 1970s, the federal Government of Canada embarked on a commitment to environmental assessment. We were late, later than the U.S. government under Richard Nixon, which brought in something called the National Environmental Policy Act, which remains to this day far superior to Canadian law on environmental review.

By fluke, I actually participated in the very first panel review of environmental assessment in Canada in 1976. When I walked into the high school gym in Baddeck, Nova Scotia, I had no idea that it was the first time there had been a public panel review of a project, but the Wreck Cove hydroelectric plant on Cape Breton Island was the first. I participated in environmental reviews thereafter as a senior policy adviser to the federal minister of environment from 1986 to 1988.

I worked with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and its then head, the late Ray Robinson, on getting permission to take the guidelines order, which was a cabinet order for environmental review, and to strengthen it by creating an environmental law, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which was brought in under former prime minister Brian Mulroney and received royal assent under former prime minister Jean Chrétien.

That bill made it very clear, as did the previous guidelines order from 1973 onwards, that any time federal jurisdiction was affected, the government had an obligation to do an environmental review. Since the early guidelines order of the 1970s, federal jurisdiction was described as federal money, federal land. Any time federal jurisdiction, which over time was narrowed down to decisions made by federal ministers under certain bills, or any of those triggers were set off, there had to be at least a cursory screening of the projects. That was the state of environmental law, with many improvements, from the early 1970s until 2012.

The previous government, under Stephen Harper, brought in amendments in 2010. I certainly know that the committee heard from industry witnesses, the Mining Association of Canada in particular, that it thought everything was just about perfect in 2010. There was an attempt to avoid duplication, there was one project one assessment, early screening, and comprehensive study. Everybody knew what was happening.

Then in the spring of 2012, the previous government brought in Bill C-38. It was an omnibus bill. It changed 70 different laws in over 430 pages. When the Conservatives complain of lack of consultation on this one, they are right. However, they are in a glass house, and anyone who fought Bill C-38 has a huge pile of stones, because there was no consultation. We did not have briefings and the government did not accept a single amendment between first reading and royal assent. That bill repealed the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act brought in under former prime minister Brian Mulroney, and it devastated the prospect of any environmental review in this country when federal jurisdiction was impacted, unless it was a big project on a short list. That is the easiest way for me to explain what happened.

The Conservatives changed the triggers by eliminating federal land, federal money, and federal jurisdiction. They just said that if it were a big project, and this is their short list, then they would do a review, but would exclude most of the public and keep the review fast. This was a Harper invention, and it was really diabolical to say that when it were an environmental assessment of a pipeline, the Environmental Assessment Agency would not run it, but the National Energy Board; that when it were an environmental assessment of a nuclear project, it would be run by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission; and that if it were an environmental assessment of drilling on the offshore in Atlantic Canada and off Newfoundland, it would be the Canada-Newfoundland Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board, and if it were off Nova Scotia, it would be the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board. This collective, which I will now refer to as the "energy regulators", had never played a role in environmental assessment before. They are part of what was broken in Bill C-38.

● (1115)

My hon. friend from Lakeland wants to know why the Kinder Morgan mess is such a mess. It goes back to that assessment being handed to an agency not competent to do it, and giving it very short timelines, which forced Kinder Morgan to say that it could no longer respect procedural fairness even for the few intervenors it let in the door because of the timeline. The attitude was that we have cut out cross-examination of expert witnesses; we have to move this thing fast; we are just going to barrel through and ignore most of the evidence because of the short timeline. The mess that this country is in right now over Kinder Morgan can be layed directly at the door of Bill C-38 in the spring of 2012.

This legislation should have repaired all of that damage. That was a promise in the Liberal platform and the commitment in the mandate letter to ministers. What do we have now? We have an omnibus bill that deals with the impact assessment piece, that deals with the National Energy Board, to be renamed the Canadian energy regulator, and deals with the disaster that happened in Bill C-45 in the fall of 2012 when the government of the day gutted the Navigable Waters Protection Act.

These three pieces of legislation are fundamental to environmental law in this country and to energy policy, and they all need fixing, but should not be fixed in one omnibus bill.

I completely agree with the member for Lakeland that this legislation was forced through committee, but it was forced through the wrong committee. The environmental assessment piece should have gone to the environment committee. The NEB/Canadian energy regulator piece should have gone to natural resources committee. The Navigable Waters Protection Act piece should have gone to transport committee.

The omnibus bill in front of us, Bill C-69, has been inadequately studied despite heroic efforts by the chair of the environment and sustainable development committee. She did a great job. The government committee members worked really hard to improve the bill, but no members had enough time. We had a deadline. A hammer fell at 9 o'clock at night on the last chance to look at it. By 12:30 in the morning, most of the amendments that were accepted were never debated at committee, much less adequately studied. It is a tragedy.

Here is how "Harper-think" has survived and owns Bill C-69 in terms of environmental assessment. We have not restored the triggers. Federal funding of a project no longer triggers an environmental review, full stop. Federal lands still do, but federal jurisdiction decisions made by the Minister of Fisheries on the Fisheries Act do not trigger an environmental assessment. Decisions made by the Minister of Transport under the Navigable Waters Act do not trigger an environmenal assessment. It will again be on the short list of big projects that we have still not seen because it is under consultation. The triggers are inadequate.

The scope of the reviews will move from there being about 4,000 to 5,000 projects a year being at least given a cursory review in the pre-2012 period to the current situation bequeathed to us by former prime minister Stephen Harper of a couple of dozen a year.

I should mention that there were two expert panels, one on the NEB and one on environmental assessment. Huge consultations were carried out. The speeches by the Liberals will probably reference the enormous level of consultation that took place before this legislation came out. It needs to be said on the record that the advice of the expert panels was ignored in both cases.

In terms of environmental assessment, what was ignored was the call to go back to the same triggers we have had since 1974: federal land, federal money, federal jurisdiction. The Liberals did not pay attention to that recommendation. They claim to have taken into account the recommendation that it be a single agency, but the bill says that when the impact assessment agency sets out a panel review in the case of a pipeline, the members of the Canadian energy regulator, which was the NEB, have to be on that panel.

More egregiously, despite the amendments accepted in committee, the government has rejected the one that says if it is the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board or the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum, board member of the panel can also sit as chairs. Only in those two instances were the amendments accepted at committee rejected by the government, and those boards were created by statute with the mandate to expand offshore oil and gas.

● (1120)

This bill is so bad that after decades of fighting for environmental assessment, I have to vote against it. That is why it is tragic. I would like to break down right now and weep for the loss of decades of experience. We know better than this.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. She is extremely passionate about this particular topic, as we know. I will not question her wisdom in terms of the information that she brings to the table in regard to this debate.

I will say that when the Liberal Party ran in the last election, Liberals had a lot of concerns over the way that things were previously being done with respect to engaging on our environmental commitments. I know that the member is concerned that three bills are being merged into one and has expressed her desire to vote against the bill.

I am interested to hear more of her comments. Looking more holistically at all of it instead of drilling down into particular items, would the member not at least agree that this bill is better than what we had before, in terms of its commitment to providing the necessary safeguards we need to protect our environment?

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, that is a tough question.

When the Minister of Finance announced that we were buying a 65-year-old pipeline, I heard him claim that the Kinder Morgan environmental review was:

> ...the most rigorous process and environmental assessment in this country's history.

It is, in point of fact, the worst. The very worst environmental review in Canada's history was the one the NEB did on Kinder Morgan. I have been involved in dozens of these reviews, and it is not hyperbole. It is a fact, and anybody in environmental law would tell us that.

Is this somewhat better than what Harper left in place? Maybe, but here is the problem: if we accept a fundamental review of this many acts now in 2018, we will not get this fixed for another decade.

This bill stinks, so I have to vote against it.

● (1125)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands for her remarks, which are always relevant. She summarized a lot of history in 10 minutes, and that was greatly appreciated.

I was wondering whether she saw another similarity between the previous Conservative government and the Liberals, specifically their habit of giving more and more power to ministers in their bills. That is what Liberals are doing in Bill C-69, which already proposes an inadequate solution that the environment minister can get out of when she sees fit.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comment. I wholeheartedly agree with him.

It is clear that this part of omnibus Bill C-69 gives more discretionary powers to the environment minister. The proposed amendments make improvements in that they seek to guide the minister's decisions, but the fact remains that this bill gives the minister more powers and does not reinstate the regulations or the transparent process that were in place before Mr. Harper's changes.

[*English*]

**Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her views on this topic. They are informed and important.

In the case of Newfoundland and Labrador, I think most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are very proud of the Atlantic Accord. They appreciate the role the life cycle regulator plays. We understand that when the regulator says "no", it says "no", but it does not just say "yes"; it asks "how?"

Why does the member not feel that the life cycle regulator has an important role to play in setting conditions at the impact assessment stage?

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, we know that the expert panel recommended that the regulator not play a role. I have watched, and I know Newfoundlanders are very proud of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board, but it has a mandate in law to expand offshore oil and gas. With all due respect, how on earth can it be seen to be unbiased when it is looking at a project to expand offshore oil and gas? This is the clearest example of an inappropriate allocation of review processes and review powers to any agency in Canada's history.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I share the initial comments of my colleague for Saanich—Gulf Islands. We have both been involved in trying to strengthen federal, provincial, territorial, and international environmental law for many decades.

The very reason I ran for office was because of my fear that the Harper government would do exactly what it eventually did when it got a majority government, and that was to shred all federal environmental law that I had worked with many other Canadians to strengthen during my 40 years as an environmental lawyer, both within the federal government and in a non-governmental organization. I was very instrumental in achieving the famous Supreme Court of Canada case, Friends of the Oldman, where the court ruled that the environment was shared federal-provincial jurisdiction, and as a result of that, we got strengthened enforcement of federal environmental laws through co-operation between both orders of government.

As my colleague just said, in the 2015 election, the Prime Minister campaigned repeatedly with promises that if elected, he would immediately restore a strengthened federal environmental assessment process. He made the commitment that he would not approve any projects without first enacting that strengthened assessment process to ensure that decisions were based on science, facts, and evidence, and would serve the public interest. The Liberal election platform promised robust oversight and that any involvement of political interference in approving projects would be removed. The Liberals also promised to ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples would be upheld, and to review and restore protections lost under the previous Conservative government, including clear rights of the public to fully participate in reviews.

Canadians actually believed the promises they were given that the previous strong federal environmental assessment and protection laws would be restored immediately if there was a Liberal government. Many voted based on those promises.

The government also promised an open, transparent, and participatory government. As my colleague from the Conservative Party mentioned, so much for that promise of participation in the review of this omnibus bill.

How well would Bill C-69 deliver on these Liberal promises? Well, we have two main concerns: one is over the process by which the bill has come before the government and been reviewed, and the second is in what the bill offers.

Our foremost concern has been the perverse and undemocratic process that the Liberals imposed for the review of the bill, and the delay in enacting this law. As the parliamentary secretary just reminded us, Bill C-69 was long overdue. For Canadians who had great anticipation, finally—finally—the government has delivered on its promise, almost into the third year of its mandate.

The government continues to approve resource projects by relying on the Harper-eviscerated review process. Examples include the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the Petronas LNG facility, and the Site C dam. We were advised at committee by the assessment agency that there are many projects in the hopper that will continue under the eviscerated Harper assessment law, even if and when the bill before us is passed, so that legacy will last for some time because of the delay in bringing forward this legislation.

Where are we at with the enactment of a strengthened impact assessment process and the reinvention of the National Energy Board?

The government expended millions of dollars on two expert panels on these two subjects. Despite broad efforts at consultation, many of the key findings and recommendations have been discarded by this government.

This year, the government tabled Bill C-69, an omnibus bill of over 800 clauses, encompassing changes to three critical laws: the federal assessment of projects, establishing a new energy regulator, and a revised law on navigable waters. After waiting two and a half years, the Liberals finally tabled this law. They then imposed time allocation on debate of this massive omnibus bill. They refused our very sensible request to divide the bill and send the three parts to three separate committees. As my colleague for Saanich—Gulf Islands noted, logically the bill would have been divided into three parts and gone to the appropriate committees.

● (1130)

The transport committee had already reviewed the navigable waters law and made a number of recommendations. My colleague provided a very wise dissenting report to in fact deliver the strengths and protections the Liberals had promised. That could have allowed a timely and focused review of each part of the bill by the three respective committees, but no—the Liberals chose to send it all to one committee, our environment committee. Then they imposed a timeline for the review of this massive bill. Of course, it is a Liberal majority committee, so it agreed to this time restriction.

The committee then refused my request to travel to at least Alberta and B.C., over a two-day period, to hear from those communities and industries that would be most impacted by this bill. The committee said it was too expensive, that committees never travel to review bills, and it rejected that idea.

The committee severely reduced the witness list. As mentioned, we had two expert panels that travelled extensively. We had a list of the people who wanted to be consulted and who all wanted to be heard on this bill. The committee said we did not have time to hear from those people and substantially reduced that list.

It then said that people could submit a brief, but guess what? We were required to submit any amendments to this bill before we even received those briefs. Over 100 briefs recommending amendments to this bill were received after the deadline to submit amendments.

I still managed to submit over 100 amendments. I could have submitted more. They were all based on what indigenous Canadians, industry, municipalities, lawyers, and the expert panels had recommended. Over 300 were submitted by the opposition. Every last one of my amendments was voted down, regardless of where they came from and regardless of the strong recommendations from even the government's expert panel.

The government itself tabled more than 100 amendments. Is that maybe an indication that the bill was drafted in haste?

Only very few of the opposition amendments were accepted. One amendment on scientific integrity that both my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands and I had tabled was accepted. The Liberals reluctantly agreed to include a change to the bill to require scientific integrity, not by the proponent, but at least by the government.

Madam Speaker, as you are aware, because you read all the amendments today in this place, we tabled additional amendments at report stage to strengthen the bill and to make it reflect what Canadians have called for. We are ever hopeful that the government will accept some of those amendments.

What about the substance of the bill? Were substantive changes made to deliver on the promises by the government to restore credibility for federal assessment? Given the way the law is drafted, it is very difficult to say. Why is that? It is because it is rife with discretion. One of the intervenors listed endless lists of discretionary triggers. We have not even seen the project list, so no one, including potential proponents, has any idea what this bill will apply to. The government could simply defer to provinces and let them do the review. There is no prescribed duty to extend rights to the public to fully participate—to table evidence, to cross-examine, and so forth. That was one of the big issues of contention on the Kinder Morgan pipeline and energy east. This bill does not extend clear rights.

A big one was that the Liberals refused to prescribe the UNDRIP, yet in this place they voted for the bill brought forward by my colleague to incorporate the UNDRIP. The Minister of Justice has promised that, going forward, every federal law will incorporate those rights accorded under the UNDRIP. However, they did not do that, so there we are: not respecting the UNDRIP, not extending clear rights to the public to participate, with no real demand for sound science, not even a specific reference to the 2030 sustainable development goals, and the problems go on and on. We just voted in this place on a bill that does not even address those measures.

In closing, I regrettably would have to say that it is impossible for me to support this bill. We had great hope. There were huge promises that the government would restore a strong environmental law assessment process. However, it failed, which is very sad.

● (1135)

**Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the perspective brought forward by the member. From the perspective of people in St. John's East, there was a lot of concern in the bill as originally proposed with respect to transition provisions. I understand from what the member had said that she feels there should not be transition provisions and everything should be rolled into the new act.

However, investors in Newfoundland and Labrador and those involved in multi-billion dollar investments in our offshore oil industry, which employ thousands of people in high-paying jobs and export-related jobs, want certainty, they need certainty, they demand certainty. In many respects, a process that had begun under CEAA 2012 is very important for them, but also with a path to a strategic environmental assessment that would carry them through into a new environmental law in the future.

This flexibility and clarity was brought forward in some of the amendments, and the member was at the committee. Therefore, I would like her thoughts on whether the amendments and the transition provisions provide more clarity to industry, moving forward.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Speaker, in fact, at committee I asked the officials to clarify what the transition provisions would be. I have not said that there should not be transition provisions.

My point is, as raised by the parliamentary secretary, that it took a long time for the government to bring forward the bill. It will have been almost three years before this bill is in place and therefore many projects are in the hopper. In fact, the Harper eviscerated law will continue to apply for many years going forward.

● (1140)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the member across the way from Alberta is very persistent in saying quite a bit about the legislation, yet on a very important issue to Alberta, she has been absolutely quiet, not a peep inside the chamber.

The Trans Mountain expansion will now take place because of the Prime Minister and this government's efforts, and the member across the way is absolutely quiet. The NDP in British Columbia is saying absolutely not. The leader of the national NDP is saying absolutely not.

What do the member's constituents, the constituents of Alberta, have to say about the importance of the Trans Mountain expansion?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Speaker, unlike the Liberals, I have been consistent. The entire nine-plus years I have been elected here, I have stood by the same position stood by all of my legal career. No project should be approved unless indigenous rights are respected, unless the public has a fair right to participate, and unless it is a credible review process.

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my question stems from the fact that in a previous life I was the parliamentary secretary to the minister of the environment in Ontario. As a minister, and as a government, we were absolutely clear that the government had an absolute duty to protect the environment for the people of the province, of the country. In light of that understanding, I was fascinated with the list of Liberal transgressions in regard to this bill, such as time allocation, the rejection of expert witnesses, and the refusal of amendments. The classic one is ignoring, absolutely, UNDRIP.

Is the member able to explain all of these transgressions? What on earth is the motivation if the role of the Liberals is to protect the people and the environment of the country?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Speaker, the greatest frustration with this 800-clause omnibus bill is that there is virtually no opportunity in this place to genuinely discuss the bill. The minister made promises over and over again. In questions, the Minister of Environment promised she would genuinely consider and accept amendments to strengthen the bill, and she rejected every attempt by the opposition.

All of the changes we brought forward were brought forward by the expert panel. Issues had been raised by the Auditor General of Canada, by the indigenous peoples of Canada, by industry in Canada, by municipalities, and by expert lawyers. We do not know why on earth the Liberals would not listen to the knowledge brought forward by Canadians. It is very sad. They could have had a historic moment. They could have brought forward a good credible environmental law.

**Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak today in support of Bill C-69.

Our government recognizes that national resource sectors are a vital part of Canada's economy. Over $500 billion in major resource projects are planned across Canada over the next decade. Those projects have the potential to create tens of thousands of well-paying jobs to support our communities and to contribute to our economy as a whole.

We have committed to regain public trust and get Canada's resources to market and to ensure those resources are developed in a responsible and sustainable way. Bill C-69 would put in place better rules that would provide predictable, timely project reviews and encourage investments. At the same time, it would ensure our environment would be protected and we could meet our commitments to reduce carbon emissions and transition to a clean growth economy.

Today, I will speak about how Bill C-69 would provide certainty for proponents and would help ensure good projects could go ahead, specifically, how it would contribute to more timely reviews and clearer requirements for companies; how it would reduce duplication and red tape by achieving our goal of one project, one review; and how it would provide a clear process and rules for transitioning to the new impact assessment system.

Throughout our extensive engagement with companies and industry groups across Canada, we heard they needed predictable, timely review processes to develop resources and get them to market. We listened, and that is exactly what the bill would provide.

Under the proposed legislation, one agency, the new impact assessment agency of Canada, will lead all major projects reviews, working closely with regulatory bodies. With one agency as the federal lead, reviews will be more consistent and indeed more predictable. A revised project list will define the types of projects that will be subject to impact assessments, providing the certainty that companies need and expect.

Our government is consulting with Canadians now to ensure the project list is robust and includes effective criteria such as environmental objectives and standards for clean air, water, and climate change. Through a new early planning and engagement phase, companies will be able to identify and address issues early in the process before an impact assessment begins. Early planning will result in tailored impact statement guidelines, a co-operation plan, an indigenous engagement and partnership plan, public participation plan, and, if required, a permitting plan.

The details of these early planning products will be further articulated in the information requirements and time management regulations. We are consulting on these now and they will come into force concurrently with the IAA. This early planning stage will define requirements and clarify expectations so companies know what is expected of them and when.

This new phase will help them design and plan their projects and more effectively engage indigenous peoples, stakeholders, and local communities. Amendments proposed by the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development will also enable the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to inform companies early on if a project is likely to have negative impacts, giving proponents an earlier opportunity to decide to continue with an impact assessment.

Bill C-69 would also put in place stricter timeline management for impact assessments, with fewer stops of the clock. Specifically, timelines for agency-led reviews would be reduced from 365 days to 300 days. Panel reviews would be shortened from 720 days to a maximum of 600 days. In addition, panel reviews for designated projects reviewed in collaboration with a federal life cycle regulator would be shortened to 300 days, with the option to allow the minister to set the timeline up to a maximum of 600 days if warranted based on the project's complexity. Timelines for non-designated projects reviewed by life cycle regulators would be shortened from 450 days to 300 days.

The regulations I mentioned earlier would also establish clear rules around when timelines could be paused. In addition, proposed amendments provide for a 45-day timeline for establishing a review panel. Together, these measures will result in more timely decisions and more certainty for proponents.

● (1145)

Companies will also know in advance what will be considered during reviews and what factors will guide decision-making. Reviews will take into account not just environmental impacts, but social, economic, and health effects, along with impacts on indigenous peoples and their rights.

Recognizing that not all project effects are negative, the bill would ensure that both positive and negative impacts would be considered. Amendments clarify that the government's public interest decision will be based on the assessment report and the consideration of specific factors.

The bill would also provide strong transparency measures so proponents would be informed about key decisions, as well as the reasons behind them. That includes, for example, decisions to extend the timeline for a review or to refer a final decision on a project to cabinet. Also, when final decisions are made on whether a project will go ahead, the proponent will be informed of the reasons why and will be assured that all factors were appropriately considered.

I want to note that in considering Bill C-69, the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development heard testimony from a number of companies and industry groups. There were suggestions for improving the bill, and I want to recognize the committee for listening to that feedback and responding.

As reported back to the House, Bill C-69 now includes stronger transparency provisions that would benefit proponents and provide more certainty and consistency across the legislation. Amendments would improve transparency by requiring assessment reports to incorporate a broader range of information, including a summary of comments received, recommendations on mitigation measures and follow-up, and the agency's rationale and conclusions. It would also require that public comments provided during the public reviews would be made available online. That information posted online would also need to be maintained so it could be accessed over time.

I would like to talk now about how Bill C-69 would achieve our government's goal of one project, one review. By providing for joint reviews and substitution, where a process led by another jurisdiction fulfills the requirement for a federal review, it would promote co-operation with provinces and territories, reduce red tape, and prevent duplication. In addition, we would be increasing opportunities for partnership with indigenous peoples and for indigenous governing bodies to take on key responsibilities, including taking the lead on projects.

I commend the standing committee for further advancing our objective of one project, one review. As a result of its work, integrated review panels with federal regulators can now include other jurisdictions, making it possible to have just one assessment that meets all requirements. This is important for investor certainty. This change responds directly to testimony made before the committee and what our government has heard from industry stakeholders. It supports our goal of certainty and timelines in review processes.

Finally, we have also heard how important it is for Bill C-69 to support a smooth transition between the current assessment regime and the new regime. Our government recognizes that this transition needs to be clear and predictable to encourage investment and keep good projects moving forward. We have also committed that no project will have to return to the beginning of the process. This legislation fulfills that promise. Under Bill C-69, projects would continue under the current rules where the assessment would already be under way.

Thanks to the work of the standing committee, the transition process in now even clearer. Amendments would increase predictability by confirming how the transition to the new review process would work, with objective criteria to identify projects that would continue to be reviewed un CEAA 2012, giving companies the option to opt in to the new process and confirming that no one would go back to the starting line.

We know that many companies are already adopting best practices that are in line with this legislation. Should they choose to opt in, we will provide advice and support to help them transition smoothly to the new requirement.

Bill C-69 is designed to help good projects move forward, not stop them. Our government is committed to developing Canada's natural resources in a sustainable and environmentally supportive way.

● (1150)

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Madam Speaker, multiple times in the member's speech she used the phrases "predictable, timely project reviews" and "provide certainty" as to how projects can proceed. However, in Bill C-69, the entire approval process could take 915 days, plus there are six opportunities to extend that. There would be a 180-day planning phase, which could be extended by 90 days by the minister or indefinitely by cabinet. There would be a 45-day window for the minister to refer assessment to a panel, and this could be suspended indefinitely. There is no timeline for establishing a panel, and the panel would have to submit a report to the minister within 600 days of the establishment of the panel. This could be extended by the minister until the prescribed activities are completed, and, again, it could be extended indefinitely by cabinet. There would also be a 90-day timeline for cabinet to make a decision, and this could be extended by 90 days by the minister or indefinitely by cabinet.

My question is simple. Multiple times the member used the terms "predictability", "timely project reviews", and "provides certainty". How can that be possible with the extended timelines I just referred to?

● (1155)

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Madam Speaker, I would suggest that the math of the member opposite is a bit challenged. In this process, industry clearly told us that the early planning phase, which considers all the items up front, would allow it to decide whether the project is indeed feasible, and then industry has the opportunity to decide whether to go forward with the impact assessment or regroup and go back to look at other options and alternatives. What industry does not want to see is what happened under the previous government, which is that industry had no option but to go full bore into the process and find itself, through that process, spending millions of dollars and still not having any certainty. This bill would provide that certainty.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, last week the parliamentary secretary, and indeed the entire Liberal government, voted to support Bill C-262, which would make sure that all the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The member for Edmonton Strathcona has brought forward some report stage amendments to the bill, which seek to do just that.

In the context of Bill C-262 and the member's support for what that bill aims to do, will the Liberal government be consistent and, this week, vote in support of those amendments, which seek to do what the member voted for just last week?

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member's question allows me to say that as we are speaking right now, the Prime Minister is in B.C. speaking to the Indigenous Advisory and Monitoring Committee, which the member may remember is the first of its kind in Canada. This is a monitoring committee for the life cycle of the TMX project, with $64 million to support it through that process. In response to the question of the member opposite, it is really important to remember that when we look at the scope of projects that are going through Bill C-69, the indigenous engagement piece and consideration of indigenous and traditional knowledge are a key element of this bill.

**Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened to the last two speeches, by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and the member for Edmonton Strathcona, who talked about this bill being pushed through the environment committee and described it as omnibus legislation, which I disagree with. I am the chair of the natural resources committee. I was at the committee and participated in the process. I am wondering if the parliamentary secretary could give us some examples of how these three departments work together to make sure that this piece of legislation works.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Madam Speaker, it is really important to note that the amendments put forward at committee included input from all three elements of the bill: natural resources, transport, and environment and climate change. Three opposition amendments were passed, and, indeed, 33 amendments were passed unanimously. That speaks so well to the way we work together to ensure that this bill has a fulsome perspective.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to Bill C-69. I also thank my colleague for sharing her time with me and allowing me to have a few minutes to speak about this important bill today.

This is an important bill that will have a significant impact on Quebec. This is not just a bill about the environment; it is also a bill that creates a problem as to how it will be enforced by provincial jurisdictions. I am particularly concerned about the Quebec government's jurisdiction, and that is the main point I want to make in my speech today.

Nothing at the core of Bill C-69 says that the agency has the power to enter into agreements with the provinces to delegate environmental assessments to the provinces. In Quebec, we already have the Bureau d'audiences publiques en environnement, or BAPE, which has considerable expertise and has never been contradicted. There have never been any scandals surrounding its independence or its reports, unlike various federal institutions, such as the NEB, where there have been many problems recently,especially regarding the independence of the board members. Doubt surrounding the independence of the board members can cast doubt on the findings, if there is not a proper process is in place.

Unlike the federal process, so far the process in Quebec has virtually always been respected and considered valid and credible. I think it is important to rely on credible institutions whenever possible, especially in Quebec.

It is obvious to me that Bill C-69 should let the agency delegate its environmental assessment authority to institutions under provincial jurisdiction. These institutions are often much more knowledgeable about their territory. We know that, in Quebec, BAPE conducts such assessments. Its employees have acquired a certain expertise over the years.

This bill will create a new institution with new people and with practices that have yet to be established. A new culture and new expertise will have to be developed, even though that already exists within the Quebec government. It is important to build on a solid foundation, and to rely on the people already in place and their knowledge of the area, because they are closer to the people of Quebec.

There is a major element in C-69 that is problematic. It allows the federal government to disregard provincial jurisdictions and to make decisions about what it wants, how it wants it, and when it wants it. Provincial legislation and municipal bylaws are not important. They are not taken into consideration.

This creates some big problems. Take, for example, how technology has evolved in our ridings. That may not be directly related to the environment, but there is an interesting parallel. Cell towers are being put up in our ridings, for Internet and all kinds of data transmissions that fall under federal jurisdiction. In many municipalities, these towers are being put up anywhere, in the middle of public parks, and sometimes in front of houses. This destroys the landscape, sometimes in heritage areas, even. The federal government does not work with the communities at all. Take the much-discussed issue of mailboxes, for example. Members will recall when Montreal mayor Denis Coderre infamously destroyed a mailbox. I am not condoning his actions, but I think it was an important symbolic gesture showing the federal government's failure to listen to the provinces and municipalities. When the federal government itself does not need to comply with our laws and regulations, it is even easier to completely ignore them.

Obviously, respect for the Government of Quebec's areas of jurisdiction, including on environmental matters, should be incorporated into Bill C-69. The Government of Quebec already has jurisdiction over the environment and that must be enforced. The Government of Quebec has to be able to enforce its own laws, its own rules, and be master within its own jurisdiction. If the federal government interferes all the time, it indirectly prevents Quebec from doing its job.

● (1200)

Bill C-69 has a lot of room for improvement in that regard. This is such a fundamental issue that the government should act in good faith, allow these changes, and abide by them. I hope all other members of the House will support us on this. Many individuals and environmental groups in Quebec share this vision.

We have seen instances of the provinces' rights not being respected, and we are about to see it again with the government imposing the Kinder Morgan pipeline on British Columbia in violation of the province's jurisdiction and the rights of the people who live along the pipeline route. When the government does not listen to the people, they see that as an injustice. A government that inflicts such an injustice loses legitimacy in their eyes, and that makes people cynical.

A government that wants to avoid cynicism must respect our institutions. There is not just one institution that matters. The government has to listen to other legitimate governments' institutions, which are just as important. To forestall intergovernmental strife, the feds must at the very least respect those institutions, but that is something the federal government does not often do.

That is one of the reasons why we in the Bloc Québécois believe that Quebec should be a country. This habit is so ingrained in this government that it can barely even function because of its arrogance and attitude of superiority. Ottawa knows best. It is always Ottawa that decides what happens and, at the end of the day, our laws and our interests are trampled on. This has to change. By amending Bill C-69, Ottawa could reach out to the provinces and try to come up with an agreement that is a little better, despite the circumstances. In short, Ottawa must respect Quebec's laws and the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement, which is pretty important.

In addition, the bill provides no guarantee that any public hearings will be held on major projects. Public hearings are important, because they give members of the public a chance to have their say on a project. When the public does not have a chance to do so, it is much harder to adapt the project and determine what the public really wants. It is much harder to sell a project when you do not seek public opinion, even if that opinion is positive. Public consultations are fundamental to any major project and, once again, they are not even mentioned in this bill.

There are no parameters for appointing the commissioners. That is a major problem because it is the Minister of the Environment who has the power to appoint the commissioners of the future agency. We end up with the same problem that we had with the National Energy Board where the government appoints agency employees who are accountable to the person who appointed them and who sometimes have special interests.

The current bill still does not address the possibility of appointing people from industry. Obviously appointing a pipeline promoter to assess a pipeline will not work because he clearly wants the pipeline built. That is his job. Similarly, if we ask a real estate agent whether the housing market is overheated, he will always say it is not, because he wants to sell houses and get a better commission. I think this leaves room for conflicts of interest and conflicts of vision.

It is therefore important to regulate the process for appointing commissioners and appointing independent commissioners rather than having commissioners appointed by the minister who are accountable to her. We know this creates major problems with regard to perception and independence, which results in a process that does not work.

For all those reasons, we will oppose Bill C-69. It is also important to consult first nations since they too have a right of oversight and should have their say.

● (1205)

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I noticed that in the beginning of his speech, if I heard him correctly, the member was talking about cellphone towers and other communication devices that are inserted into different landscapes and different areas, traditionally with very little public input. When I was involved in municipal politics in Kingston, on a number of occasions the federal government, which has jurisdiction over particular areas, would do things without proper consultation with other interested stakeholders.

I wonder if the member could expand on how he sees that coming through in this legislation, and how it could be improved if he does not think this bill captures that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Mr. Speaker, my intention in bringing up cell towers was to give an example of a case where the federal government is disregarding both provincial laws and municipal bylaws. Urban planning is a municipal responsibility, and cities should be able to decide where towers should be installed. There is an important question in all this with regard to urban development and landscape integration. However, that goes beyond Bill C-69. In my opinion, the important thing is for the bill to respect areas of provincial jurisdiction and comply with municipal bylaws. The example of cell towers illustrates the federal government's tendency to disregard municipal bylaws and provincial laws. If we want good collaboration and well-run projects in the future, it is essential that the federal government get in the habit of complying with these provincial laws, since they are perfectly valid, having been passed by elected officials like us. These laws were passed for the benefit of the people. Furthermore, provincial elected representatives are often closer to their constituents than their federal counterparts, since Ottawa is quite far away for many people.

● (1210)

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his remarks. I will admit that I share some of the views he put forward in his speech. However, I think he overlooked the biggest snag, and that is what I would like to hear him talk about in the next few minutes.

Even though the bill allows BAPE to conduct a certain number of environmental assessments and make use of its expertise, the biggest snag in Bill C-69 is the fact that the minister ultimately gets to decide, with the stroke of a pen, whether to proceed, or not proceed, with the recommendations made to her, regardless of who made them.

Would my colleague not agree that the major snag in Bill C-69 is the enormous powers it gives to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change?

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for bringing up that issue, which I did not have a chance to address in my speech.

That is a very important point. The consultation process is not even mandatory in every situation and the government is not even required to consult the public, far from it. If there is a consultation process, we know that the people running it were appointed to do so by the minister. In fact, the minister is responsible for appointing commissioners, so there is already something wrong there. Once the consultation process is complete, the commissioners' report may not support the project, but the minister could still go ahead with it anyway. That is not good either. The process is already flawed from the outset. Basically, the process is useless because the minister can do as she pleases regardless.

What is the point of the process if the minister can do as she pleases without taking the discussions into account? That is a major problem with this bill. It is also one of the reasons why we are opposed to it.

[*English*]

**Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the criticisms of this bill is that it does not include a legal requirement for free, prior, and informed consent.

I know that my colleague, the member for Edmonton Strathcona, tried to have that inserted at committee stage, and of course we find ourselves here today, once again trying to get the government to honour the passage of Bill C-262 that the House passed last week.

Will my hon. colleague be supporting my colleague's amendment on that issue today?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Mr. Speaker, I have not yet had the opportunity to review my colleague's amendment.

From what she said, it seems to be a very good amendment. However, since I have not had the opportunity to read it, I cannot personally comment on it. I look forward to reading it. If it is an amendment that we deem to be beneficial to Quebec's interests, then we will obviously vote in favour of it.

[*English*]

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, members will hear from this side of the House just how tragic and pathetic this piece of proposed legislation really is.

It is interesting, because the Liberals think they have found a balance. The NDP oppose it for some reasons and we oppose it for others, but typically the reason for the opposition is that it just gives way too much power to the minister, and has way too little transparency and accountability. Not only is this proposed legislation dangerous, and I use that word deliberately, but it is also going to have a very real impact on a large number of people across this country, particularly those who live in areas dependent on resource development.

The Liberals had an opportunity to smooth out the environmental assessment process with this bill, but instead they chose to do the complete opposite. I think there is an intent here to destroy the credibility of the existing EA process in Canada, because the Liberals do not actually want to see resource development carried out. Our Prime Minister will say one thing in Alberta, and as we saw earlier this spring, go to France two days later and apologize for not getting rid of the energy industry soon enough. Therefore, I believe there is an agenda here to complicate this process and to make it basically unmanageable. Then the reality will be that it will not be possible to put in place resource projects across this country. Investors are already basically laughing at Canada and walking away. We saw an article yesterday saying that investors no longer even bother considering Canada as an option to invest in. Therefore, the Liberals are getting their way. The NDP members are getting their way.

The problem with these big government initiatives and socialism, and those of us who live in Saskatchewan understand it, is that it takes a while for the pain to actually begin. It does not happen right away. It is not immediate, but it is profound and long-lasting. The bill before us will have a profoundly long-lasting and negative impact on Canada and our economy.

The bill before us, Bill C-69, is called an act to enact the impact assessment act and the Canadian energy regulator act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts. The main thing it would do is to set up a new impact assessment agency of Canada, replacing some other agencies. That agency will then be the lead on all federal reviews of major projects and would be expected, I guess, to work with other bodies on that.

However, realistically, what will happen here, because of the many things that are being thrown into this mix of what will be called an environmental assessment reality, is that these projects will just not get done. It is interesting, because the bill would add a number of things that need to be considered in an environmental assessment, and things that go far beyond the environment, but it would basically give anyone who has an objection to a project the right to claim there would be some impact on them and that they have a legitimate reason to have the project stopped.

I will talk a little about the process that would take place, because I think when Canadians see it, they will start to understand how disingenuous the government has been with this bill.

If we want to apply for a project, we need to go through an environmental assessment on most things. The Liberals have set up the proposed legislation so that, supposedly, there will be a planning phase of up to a maximum 180 days. This could then go in a couple of directions. It could go to a joint panel, or it could go back to the assessment agency, and there would be some timelines. However, there are a variety of tracks available for it to follow. It could end up at a review panel. The agency itself would oversee the smaller projects and then would have a full review of the larger projects. After a while, when that is done, the agency or panel would submit a recommendation and the minister would have 30 days to approve or reject it.

Well, that sounds pretty straightforward, until we start to look at the actual processes involved in this, and I want to go through three possible tracks. I will probably use most of my time doing this, but it would just point out to Canadians how bizarre this gets and how much interference the minister can play, as the NDP just pointed that out with their last questions.

The minister basically has authority at all levels over these things. The minister can make things go ahead or stop dead, and they can stay stopped if the minister and cabinet decide to do that.

First of all, I will talk about a decision that does not require a joint panel. It does not even require approval by cabinet. Under this proposed legislation, there would be a 180-day planning phase. This is something brand new that the government has thrown in here, which would already put a six-month delay or kind of stop on a project moving ahead. This could be extended by 90 days or it could be extended indefinitely by the minister if someone demanded that. There is no clarity around what that means.

● (1215)

Then there is a 300-day time limit for the impact assessment itself, almost a year, and no surprise, this can be extended by 90 days or indefinitely by cabinet. Timelines are thrown completely out. There is no certainty at all. Why would investors bother getting involved with something like this? And this is the simplest process of the few that are there.

Then there is a 30-day time limit after the minister and cabinet have already been involved at two different levels. It then comes to the minister and cabinet to make the decision. What kind of industry organization or business is going to come forward and put themselves through this when there is absolutely no certainty?

No surprise, that 30-day time limit can be extended by 90 days or it can be extended indefinitely. That is the simplest. A joint panel is not required. Approval by cabinet is not required. At all three levels of planning and working through the process, cabinet has authority to extend the deadline indefinitely or to whatever it chooses to extend it to. A joint panel is not required, and approval by cabinet is not required. Under Bill C-69 the total time should be about 570 days, almost a year and a half, but again, there are several opportunities to extend it.

It starts out again with that 180-day planning phase, which can be extended by 90 days or indefinitely by the minister or cabinet. Then there is a 300-day time limit for the impact assessment itself. The proponent has to get this all done in 300 days, considering all of the different factors that the government has thrown into Bill C-69, and this can be extended by 90 days or indefinitely by the minister or cabinet. Then there is a 90-day limit for cabinet to make a decision and again, this can be extended by 90 days or indefinitely by cabinet.

Those are two tracks.

The third one is a decision that requires a joint panel with a cabinet decision. The time frame on this one is set at 835 days, well over two years, with at least one opportunity to extend it. There are 10 days to start a 45-day screening process, once the decision has been made that this has to go through a joint panel. Then there is 60 days from notice to referring the assessment to the panel. Then there is 24 months from the referral when a decision statement must be issued. This can be extended 90 days by the minister, or indefinitely by cabinet. That actually was the case in the past under the CEAA 2012 method, but under Bill C-69 it would go from that 800 days to 915 days, and there are six opportunities in the bill to extend it.

So there is a 180-day planning phase and a 45-day window for the minister to refer an assessment to a panel, and there is no timeline for establishing a panel at all. The panel has to submit a report to the minister within 600 days, another two years down the road, and this can be extended by the minister until anything the panel prescribes is completed, or by 90 days. Cabinet an extend it indefinitely again, and then there is another 90-day timeline for cabinet.

This assessment process that the government has thrown into the bill is basically a game. It is a game that cabinet can play with anybody who wants to apply for a project in Canada.

It is no surprise as I mentioned before that people are looking at other places to invest. They are investing in other countries. The Americans right now are making it very clear that they want to become the world's largest energy producer and exporter. They are eating our lunch right now. They are doing things: they are lowering taxes; they are easing the regulatory burden on people; and they are not imposing a massive carbon tax that will raise the price of everything. It is no surprise that money is moving out of Canada and into the United States.

The latest version of that is the Liberal government's decision to pay $5 billion to a Texas-based company to buy a used pipeline, which is going to take another $8 billion to $10 billion at least, and probably more knowing this government is involved. That money will be given to this project when the proponent initially did not ask for any money.

It is unfortunate that the Liberals do not keep their promises. This is one more that has been broken. They have not fulfilled their commitments. This entire piece of legislation is just meant to hamper the industry's capacity to be able to do resource development in this country. I am sorry it has even come forward. I wish it were set aside. If this legislation is passed, it will not be a good thing for this country.

● (1220)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again we are confronted with one of those issues where the Conservatives think we are doing too much and the NDP think we are not doing enough. I cannot help but wonder, objectively speaking, that if we removed ourselves from all of the partisanship right now, if we would not perhaps think that what the government is proposing is somewhere right around where it should be, and what Canadians expect and want.

I take particular interest in the member's comment on investment in Canada. Yes, despite the fact that the price of oil has gone down and investment throughout the world is suffering as a result, Canada still had a growth rate of 3.1% in 2017 and is on track for approximately 2.5% according to the BDC in 2018.

Could the member not at least admit that maybe things are not as horrible and as nearly catastrophic as the Conservatives are suggesting they are?

● (1225)

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, it is actually hilarious that, as usual, when everyone is against the government, it assumes it has found a good balance, and that is not the case. This is not a balance; it is just a mess. We have heard some varying criticisms from the New Democrats, but we have some common ones too, such as that the bill does not achieve the goals it sets out. It involves the cabinet and the minister in far too many places on far too many occasions. I guess we have concerns for different reasons on that.

The reality is that the Liberals have cost Canada hundreds of billions of dollars in investment. We have talked about $70 billion or $80 billion on the oil and gas side. We know that the Liberals lost a $35-billion Petronas natural gas plant because they could not make a decision about pipelines. The mining industry in this country has basically gone into neutral with respect to applying for projects. There may be one in the approval process right now.

This is not a good thing for Canada. It is not a good thing for resource development. As I mentioned earlier, the socialist policies the member for Kingston and the Islands across the way really loves to espouse are the kinds of things that actually destroy economies eventually and leave people far behind where they should have been in the first place.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my Conservative colleague a question specifically in the context of the vote we had last week on Bill C-262. I know that the Conservatives did not vote for it, but the important fact is that the Liberals did.

My colleague, the member for Edmonton Strathcona, moved a series of amendments at report stage that seek to bring Bill C-69 in harmony with what the Liberals supported last week on Bill C-262. Does the member have a reasonable expectation that the Liberals would at least remain consistent and support those amendments from the member for Edmonton Strathcona, or are we going to see a flip-flop, where they say one thing and do something completely opposite?

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, it is rare that we see any consistency from the government opposite, except where they are increasing taxes on Canadians, increasing the regulatory burden on industry, and basically dragging the economy down. I guess one of the places that would show up is the carbon tax that is being put in place. The honesty and transparency of the government is really on display when it will not tell us how much that is going to cost. We know it has the numbers in documents, but it has taken a black felt marker and crossed them all out.

In answer to the member's question, we certainly do not expect any consistency from the Liberals. We do not see it in their votes on legislation. We do not see it in their budgets. We do not see it with respect to their keeping the promises they have made in the past.

**Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise today to speak in support of Bill C-69. With this bill, our government is meeting our commitment to rebuild public trust and help get Canada's resources to market. In developing Bill C-69, we heard from provinces, territories, indigenous peoples, businesses, environmental groups, and Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Overwhelmingly, they told us that they want a modern environmental and regulatory system that protects the environment, supports reconciliation with indigenous peoples, attracts investment, and ensures that good projects can go ahead. That is exactly what our government has delivered in introducing this bill.

Through better rules, Bill C-69 would support the responsible development of Canada's natural resources, create good middle-class jobs, and help grow our economy. Measures in this bill would provide more timely and predictable reviews, more certainty for businesses, and more opportunities for partnerships with indigenous peoples.

Today I would like to take a step back. I want to look more closely at the question of public trust. I am going to discuss what it means to rebuild that trust, how this bill would accomplish that, and how the hard work of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development has contributed through its careful study of the bill and its thoughtful amendments.

Where there is public trust, proponents, indigenous peoples, stakeholders, and all Canadians can have confidence that major project reviews are based on evidence, including robust science, and indigenous knowledge. It also means that when final decisions are made, Canadians can be assured that those decisions have fully considered the evidence and that they serve the public interest. That is what has been lost under the current rules, and it is what Bill C-69 would restore.

It would do that in a few ways, which I will go on to discuss in more detail. It would do so by clearly setting out in legislation which factors would be considered in reviews of major projects; by ensuring that decisions were made in the public interest, and the reasons for them were communicated; and by ensuring that panels established to conduct project reviews were balanced and included the right people with the right expertise.

I will begin with the factors that would guide major project reviews. Compared with CEAA 2012, Bill C-69 sets out a more comprehensive and complete set of factors for consideration in reviews. While it would provide strong protection for the environment, the bill would expand the scope of reviews beyond the environment alone. Assessments would take a broader view based on sustainability, taking into account a wide range of impacts on the economy, health, indigenous rights, and the community.

Crucially, Bill C-69 would require consideration of a project's impact on indigenous peoples and their rights. In the words of the Prime Minister, "No relationship is more important to Canada than the relationship with Indigenous Peoples." Considering the rights of indigenous peoples in every review fully aligns with our commitment to achieve reconciliation through a renewed relationship based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

Finally, the bill reflects our government's commitment to effective action on climate change. It would ensure that reviews considered the effects of major projects on Canada's ability to meet our climate change commitments as well as our obligations related to environmental challenges like air quality and biodiversity. That supports our actions to fight carbon pollution, such as working with partners to put a price on pollution that will cut 80 million to 90 million tonnes of GHG emissions by 2022.

That is where we began when our government introduced Bill C-69 in this House in February. Since then, the standing committee has strengthened the bill by adding even more clarity on factors to consider in project reviews and by improving consistency across the legislation.

To highlight just a few of the changes, the committee clarified that both positive and negative impacts must be considered, recognizing that not all effects of major resource projects will be negative. It amended the proposed Canadian energy regulator act to ensure that climate change is considered when making decisions about non-designated projects, including pipelines, power lines, and offshore projects. It improved consistency by requiring that the same set of factors guide the agency's decision on what information and studies are required for a project review, the review itself, and inform the impact assessment report. All these measures would support more predictable reviews, more certainty for industry, and public trust.

● (1230)

Over and over we have heard that a good process means nothing if the decision at the end is opaque and is based on politics, not evidence. When that happens, there can be no public trust. Bill C-69 would do the opposite. It would set up safeguards to ensure that science, indigenous knowledge, and other evidence formed the basis for important decisions on whether major projects would go ahead.

Specifically, following amendments by the standing committee, the bill would require decisions to be based on the assessment report prepared by the impact assessment agency of Canada. Decisions would also need to consider key factors, including the project's contribution to sustainability, meaning its ability to protect the environment and contribute to the social and economic well-being of the people of Canada and preserve their health in a way that benefits present and future generations.

To provide certainty and build trust, public decision statements would need to clearly demonstrate how the assessment report formed the basis for the decision and how those factors were considered. This clarity would benefit all parties: proponents, indigenous peoples, and stakeholders. Through transparency and accountability, it would help ensure that the decisions on projects were made in the public trust.

In terms of further amendments that would improve transparency and help restore trust, the bill would now require that the minister consider any feedback provided by the proponent when deciding whether a decision statement for a project would expire or whether the timeline would be extended. The comments would have to be provided during a time period specified by the impact assessment agency of Canada so that meaningful public participation was assured and balanced with the need for timely assessments.

Last, I want to talk about the safeguards Bill C-69 would provide so that panels set up to review major projects with life-cycle regulators would strike the right balance in their membership. Our government and the standing committee heard from some groups that this is a critical step toward restoring public trust. We recognize that these regulators have long-standing specialized expertise and knowledge. Their participation is essential to ensuring that Canada's resources are developed in a way that protects the environment and grows the economy. We put forward amendments in committee to strike a balance to ensure that review panels also included other voices and perspectives. The bill would require that federal regulators not constitute a majority on the panel. At the same time, regulators would continue to serve on panels and contribute their expertise.

We cannot get Canada's resources to market without public trust. With this bill, we would rebuild that trust by introducing new, fairer processes for project reviews. Bill C-69 would define the needed safeguards so that Canadians could again have confidence that processes were fair and evidence-based, that decisions served the public interest, and that the right projects went forward. As I have described, these measures would include clearly setting out in advance the key factors that would guide major project reviews; requiring evidence-based decision-making; being transparent when final decisions were made so that Canadians would know that the process was being followed, and they could have confidence in the outcome; and ensuring balanced review panels that would bring together diverse expertise and multiple perspectives.

I would like to conclude by once again recognizing the work of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. As a result of its members' insight and dedication, the committee's work has produced an amended bill that would respond to the priorities of indigenous peoples, stakeholders, and Canadians and would further contribute to our goal of restoring the public trust.

● (1235)

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is from Ontario, and he should know that this bill is exactly what the McGuinty and Wynne Liberals did to the Ontario Energy Board. They totally politicized it. There was a pipeline of communications going between cabinet and that particular body, supposedly a body that was regulating the industry. Everything went the way they wanted it to. Look what happened in Ontario: hydro rates exploded, and now that party is on the verge of non-party status. It is being obliterated. The one common thread between that Ontario government and the current federal government is the Prime Minister's puppet master.

No matter how many billions of dollars they throw into Kinder Morgan, this bill would provide the kill switch. It will not be hydro bills; it will be outrageous and unaffordable gas bills people see at the pumps.

Since the member has turned his back on his constituents, what is he going to do when they turn their backs on him?

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Mr. Speaker, I guess I should not be surprised by the comments from the member opposite. Everything that comes is fear-based hysterical propaganda. I just find it very surprising that she finds a way to politicize everything and is able to develop another fundraising clip for her Facebook page.

Our government is focused on doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do, and that is ensuring that the economy and the environment go hand in hand. That is exactly what this bill will ensure: that good projects move forward and that we have meaningful public engagement. Of course, the opposite side would not even know what that term means, given what happened in CEAA 2012 with the undemocratic process of pushing it through in a budget bill and not even letting it get to committee.

We have found a balance here that is going to help get our resources to market, while at the same time protecting the public trust and ensuring that our environment is protected as well.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the gaps in Bill C-69 is that it only requires a consideration of indigenous knowledge in going ahead with these assessments.

The member for Edmonton Strathcona has moved some report stage amendments, specifically Motions Nos. 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 13, which seek to bring this bill in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I checked the vote last week on May 30, and the member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington did vote in support of Bill C-262, which seeks to bring Canadian laws in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Will the member be consistent with his vote last week and vote in support of these amendments when they come before the House?

● (1240)

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Mr. Speaker, I was also on the indigenous committee that studied Bill C-262. I am a very strong supporter of UNDRIP.

I am proud to say that we are the government that for the first time has embedded UNDRIP into a bill, even before UNDRIP was put into effect in this House, by introducing it into Bill C-69 through amendments that the Liberal members of the committee had put forward. I strove to ensure that UNDRIP was included in Bill C-69 even before Bill C-262 has fully passed in this House.

I am very proud of what our government is doing in moving forward with Bill C-262 and I have tremendous respect for the member for the James Bay region and his work on that bill.

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the member made a comment calling a member in this House "hysterical". I think the comment was maybe made in haste, and I would ask that the comment be withdrawn.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** I will leave it to the hon. member. Do you want to respond to that?

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** The tactics were hysterical.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** I have heard a lot of things go back and forth, a lot of things I would love to get up for and stop, but I think we have set a standard. Unfortunately, I am not sure that is quite over the line. He did clarify a little. I would suggest that maybe the two members could talk to each other after the session and maybe iron things out.

Questions and comments.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member serves on the environment committee, which I had the opportunity to serve on too, as did the member for Edmonton Strathcona.

In her speech earlier, she basically all but said that she had absolutely no input, that when she put forward ideas or asked for witnesses to come forward, repeatedly her suggestions and everything she had to offer were not permitted to take place in the committee. That is certainly not what I saw in my observations in the committee.

I am wondering if the member could comment on the value that the committee puts on the input from the member for Edmonton Strathcona.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Mr. Speaker, I have tremendous respect for the member for Edmonton Strathcona, the knowledge that she brought to the committee, and her life experiences working on environmental issues in Alberta and throughout the assessment process. In fact, I consulted with her on a number of issues, and it even helped to inform the amendments that I myself put forward.

I have tremendous respect for her and for all members on the committee. We have all worked exceptionally well together. I will add that Liberal members even gave up their opportunities to speak in order to enable the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to have a voice on our committee. We will continue to do so. We are proud of the work that our committee does.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I first want to address the comment made to the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. It is not fearmongering and it is not hysteria; it is the fact that the constituents of her riding believe in her, because they know she is going to fight for what they believe in. The fact that she comes to this chamber with such passion is something we can all learn from, because she listens to her constituents and brings their voices to the chamber.

There was a comment made regarding the member for Edmonton Strathcona having a voice at the table. I adore the member for Edmonton Strathcona. Although we are from different parties, she brings so much to the House because of her background. When I sat down with her and we talked, she let me know she felt almost demoralized. That is not her word, but she felt she could not bring anything to the committee because Liberals were not listening. She had so much to bring to that committee, and those voices were not heard. People can say, "We let you sit at the table; we just told you to shut up", and that is basically what happened here. That is very concerning.

UNDRIP is another thing, and I will allow the NDP members to talk about UNDRIP in this bill. The government says it will vote for something one week, and then the next week it does a total 180°.

I will now speak on Bill C-69, an act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act, and to make consequential amendments to other acts. I must agree that with that title, we can recognize how large this act is and how many different committees should have been looking at this bill, but instead Liberals sent it to the environment committee, where it got shut down in debate.

There are many concerns being highlighted by the Conservative caucus, informing Canadians about concerns for Canada's economy and the decreased competitiveness in Canada on a number of issues, including reduced taxes on corporations in the U.S. and the $25-a-barrel discount on our oil.

I want to discuss this issue to highlight how it impacts our constituents. I am from the riding of Elgin—Middlesex—London. I am not from a riding that is oceanside and there are not a lot of pipes going through my community, but this bill will impact my community of Elgin—Middlesex—London, so I want to discuss two key items.

In late spring, a bridge collapsed in the village of Port Bruce. This bridge connected the village of Port Bruce to the rest of Aylmer on Highway 73. The first issue was how to rebuild the bridge. We had to look at so many different things, including where we were going to get the money and what we were going to do. There are great people in the municipalities and the country working on this. When the bridge collapsed, one of the first things that came to mind, other than the money, was what the government was going to do with regard to environmental impacts and what kinds of delays the community and council were going to have to deal with.

Having worked with a former MP, I recalled some work I had done with the municipality of Thames Centre back in 2010 on species at risk. We have to understand that there are going to be obstacles, and there was about a 10-month delay in the municipality of Thames Centre because of this. I am very concerned that we will see delays like this when this new legislation proposed by the Liberal government passes. Maybe some things will work and maybe some things are better, but we will never know, because we never got the chance to debate it.

The bridge that collapsed is near the mouth of Catfish Creek and connects the waterways from Catfish Creek to the Great Lakes, specifically Lake Erie. Although I agree with the necessity of environmental assessments, I am concerned that the reconstruction of the bridge will be hampered because of increased bureaucracy, specifically with the passage of Bill C-69. This small community needs support from all levels of government, including the Government of Canada. What will these new timelines do to the government's response and what will the government's involvement be in this project?

Although the government states that what is in the bill would reduce the timelines, we have seen the government's track record and the raft of broken promises. I just do not have it in me to believe that this proposed legislation would create anything but obstacles for our economy and the people who live in Canada. The new planning phase would add an additional 180 days, followed by a 30-day assessment by the minister. There are so many opportunities for both major and minor projects to be slowed down because of this hierarchy and the ministerial and Governor in Council exemptions.

● (1245)

The village of Port Bruce will need a plan. I have reached out to all of the ministers of the government who could impact the reconstruction of this bridge. To date, all of the responses that I have received are basically a bunch of Liberal talking points. I am not seeing assistance. I am not seeing help. Rather, I see the government telling me what it is doing and patting itself on the back and saying that maybe we can go after the gas tax fund. Those are not the kinds of things that we need from the government. I do not really know if people in government understand how smaller municipalities need to work together with all levels of government and how they have to be part of this. They cannot just give us platitudes.

Whether the township and county decide to go with a temporary bridge or go directly toward reconstructing this bridge, I fear that the government will slow things down. The village is a tourist destination and is currently being greatly impacted by the inability of people to take a direct route. We also must be concerned over the inability of the township to adequately provide emergency services. One of the biggest challenges that this community has had is that Highway 73 does not even go there, so we have had neighbouring municipalities get on board to provide those emergency services.

However, we must move forward on our project, and I am totally concerned about what is going to happen in our next phase. Once it decides what it will do, what is the government going to be doing with new red tape approaches, both to the county and to the municipalities?

My second point also focuses on the farmers in my riding and the change to the navigational waters act. For years, I have heard from local farmers about some of the restrictions regarding ditches and things of that sort. We all have different ways of looking at it, but the fact is that we do not have a way of discussing this issue because when we are at committee, debate gets shut down.

For years farmers have been strongly speaking about the restrictions that they have been under, and when in 2012 there were some changes, they applauded the government because they felt that they were not going to be restricted as much. That is positive. When we are trying to work on the economy, we want to make sure that we are working with the stewards of our land and not always against them. I am always concerned with how we are going to make sure we are working forward. I believe in our farmers and I have watched them use responsible methods to improve their applications.

What will this legislation do to impact our local farmers, as well as reconstruction of the bridge? Well, I wish I could tell members more about that, but this bill was rammed through the committee and amendments proposed by all opposition parties were ignored. The government says it is allowing people's voices to be heard, but we know that the moment nine o'clock strikes at committee, committee members can not debate anything further.

We know that the Liberal government put in over 100 of their own recommendations when it came to amendments. Are the Liberals saying that this bill does not need amendments? By having to amend their own bill that many times, I think they have proven to the entire committee and to all Canadians that the bill is flawed.

We may not agree on everything, but the government cut debate. Although we may not agree on everything, the most important part is to listen. As the chair of the status of women committee, I have seen some co-operation when we are talking about amendments and when we are talking about recommendations. When we are all sitting at the table and really trying to do what is best for Canadians, everyone is actually listening. There are opportunities for us to merge. When we are putting in a recommendation, we may take something from the NDP or we may take something from the Liberals and the Conservative Party and merge those thoughts together so that we can all be heard, but Canadian voices have been shut down at committee and in this House when debating this bill.

How are Canadians supposed to know that their voices are being heard when time allocation is being imposed not only on their representatives in this House but also in the committees? How do we know that we are getting what is best for Canadians when the Liberals seem to be listening only to themselves and not listening to some of these amendments?

I agree that Liberals may have some good suggestions but do not think that the Conservatives, the NDP, the Green Party, and the Bloc all have good suggestions. We need to work together.

I see that part of my role as a parliamentarian is to listen. I urge the government to start to listen again. We have seen a lot of problems, but if the government can get off its talking points, maybe we can all do better. I think that is part of the issue: the questions that are being asked are taken back to government talking points. We are not talking about how it is going to impact people. We are not talking how it is going to impact the Trans Mountain pipeline. We are not talking about those things. We are talking about spending $4.5 billion without even seeing how we will get a pipeline built. We know that the government was the obstacle for Kinder Morgan, and now how is it not going to be the obstacle for itself, unless it turns 180° once again?

The government's role is to create a positive atmosphere for businesses to succeed. New taxes, government red tape, and truly poor opportunities for Canadians to speak on legislative changes that engage Canadians are here with this government. I heard the leader of the Greens say that we can do better. With discussions and amendments actually being heard, we can do better. I urge the Liberals to start consulting with all parties.

● (1250)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a great deal of consultation through the ministry with many different stakeholders. Members of Parliament have been speaking to this legislation for a good period of time now, whether in the House or at committee.

I would not have any hesitation contrasting what we have witnessed on this side compared to when Mr. Harper was prime minister. One need only look at the amendment process. If we were afforded the opportunity to have a thorough discussion, I am sure the member would retract some of those comments.

NDP members have said they are voting against the legislation because we have gone nowhere near far enough and they want more done to protect the environment. On the other hand, the Conservatives are saying they are voting against the legislation because they believe we are putting in too much regulation. My colleague, the member for Kingston and the Islands, has put it quite well.

Does the member not see that there is significant value, that there is an enhancement of our environment, and that there are ways in which we can have both the economy and the environment working together for the common good? We do not see that coming from either the NDP or the Conservatives.

● (1255)

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, part of my issue is that I see these talking points, these words, as disingenuous. I have seen the government ram through things at so many different committees. It is the Liberals' ideology or nothing. As I indicated, I have huge respect for the member for Edmonton Strathcona. When she feels that her voice is being shut down on this, that speaks volumes for many Canadians.

We may have different approaches to this, but when the government is not listening, it does not matter. It does not mean that the Liberals have found a middle balance because the left says one thing and the right says another, so the Liberals are right. They are not listening, and this has to do with the fact that they shut down debate at committee and they ram through legislation. There is just no honesty here.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague's speech. I would like to address the comments that were just made. When the Conservative Party and the NDP say they will vote against the bill for different reasons, there is one that jumps out at me. The NDP is clearly concerned that the minister's new powers will allow her to approve projects that should not be approved. The Conservatives have the exact opposite position. I respect both these positions.

Does that not clearly demonstrate the arbitrary nature of this flawed bill?

[*English*]

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, we discussed the fact that there should have been three different committees looking at this. The natural resources committee should have been looking at this. The environment committee should have been looking at this. There should have been a variety of different groups and committees working on this to make sure that we are doing what is best for Canadians.

I really do not think the Liberal government listens. It is the Liberals' way or the highway, and that is what we are seeing with this piece of legislation. They are ramming something through, where if there are proper alternatives that are going to work for businesses, as well as for people who have environmental concerns, we can find some balance.

Just because the left and the right are disagreeing, that does not make the centre right for the Liberals' big omnibus bill. That is exactly what it is. When the Conservatives and the NDP are agreeing and nodding heads, one knows there is a problem, and maybe the government should recognize that it is not listening.

**Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know the member remembers a time when we were in government and we streamlined and fixed the problems. DFO was getting involved in municipal drains. There were navigable water issues in my riding, where there are no boats going up any rivers. There were double environmental assessments for infrastructure projects, which created duplication and waste. It was 10 years to get a hydroelectric project completed, with environmental screenings for cedar benches in Parks Canada. We made improvements to get rid of that waste and redundancy. I wonder if the member could talk about that for a minute.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, we needed to get rid of duplication, and that is exactly what the former government did. For 14 years, I have been meeting with farmers and farmers groups, and one of the biggest things I heard from grain and oilseed farmers in Elgin—Middlesex—London was about their concerns with the navigable waters act. There are times when we need to trigger an environmental assessment, but there are times when the Liberals have gone way too far. About the DFO, we have to work on that and fix it because this is only going to get worse.

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak in support of Bill C-69. The bill fulfills a core commitment our government made to rebuild public trust in the environmental assessment system. It is based on 14 months of consultation with provinces and territories, indigenous peoples, companies, environmental groups, and Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

● (1300)

[*Translation*]

Today, I will start by outlining why we created this bill and what it will accomplish. I will then discuss how our government and the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development have engaged in dialogue with indigenous communities and other partners throughout this process. I will also speak about what we heard.

[*English*]

Finally, I will describe how the standing committee's hard work in studying and amending the bill responds to the comments that have been received, and how it supports our government's commitment to a clean environment and a strong economy.

Before I begin, I would like to congratulate the standing committee and recognize what has been accomplished. Consideration of such a complex and significant bill is a challenging task. I commend the committee for its openness in hearing diverse witness testimony and for making thoughtful amendments that address important issues and significantly strengthen the original bill.

I would like to start my comments by providing some background about Bill C-69: why it is before us today and why it is so important for the future of Canada's economy and environment.

Public trust was eroded as a result of changes made by the Harper government in 2012. Canadians lost confidence in how decisions about major resource projects were made. Bill C-69 aims to restore that trust, put in place better rules to protect our environment, and build a stronger economy. It reflects our conviction that a clean environment and a strong economy can and must go hand in hand in the modern world, something that has guided all of our actions since forming government. It takes a balanced approach: providing certainty for industry while upholding the rights of indigenous peoples, protecting our environment, and facilitating the generation of economic benefits for all Canadians.

I would like to thank indigenous peoples, stakeholders, and Canadians who contributed their knowledge and perspectives. The proposed legislation provides many important improvements. Decisions would be transparent and guided by robust science and indigenous knowledge. Project reviews would consider a wide range of impacts on the economy, health, indigenous rights, and the community, not simply the environment. Reviews would be more timely and more predicable. Measures are included to advance reconciliation and partnership with indigenous peoples. Duplication and red tape would be reduced through a "one project, one review" approach.

[*Translation*]

As I was saying, during months of consultation, indigenous peoples, stakeholders, and Canadians across the country helped us develop Bill C-69. Since the bill was introduced, our government has continued to ensure that they participate fully in the process at every opportunity.

[*English*]

Hearing from Canadians directly was also central to the standing committee's consideration of the bill. In recent months, the committee heard from more than 80 witnesses with diverse perspectives and expertise. I would like to share some of the valuable input that we heard from stakeholders during this process.

First, indigenous peoples and organizations have said that Bill C-69 must fully support our government's goal of advancing reconciliation and a renewed relationship based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership, as well as our commitment to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is critically important.

[*Translation*]

As the Prime Minister said, no relationship is more important to Canada than the one with indigenous peoples.

[*English*]

Environmental organizations have stressed the importance of public participation and accessible, transparent information. In particular, they told us that the bill must ensure not just participation, but meaningful participation that has an influence on project reviews and decision-making. From industry and other stakeholders, we heard that the legislation must provide certainty and clarity about what would be considered in project reviews and in decision-making.

[*Translation*]

The project proponent and other participants should feel confident that the decisions are evidence-based and are made in the public interest.

[*English*]

I am pleased that the standing committee has made a number of amendments to the bill that respond to many of the comments and concerns highlighted by stakeholders and indigenous peoples. Finding appropriate ways to address these issues is not easy, and I want to recognize the committee for its dedication and its collaborative approach.

[*Translation*]

I would now like to mention some amendments made by the committee and explain how they support our goals for a sound environment and a strong economy.

[*English*]

As a result of the committee's work and feedback from indigenous peoples, the bill now clearly states our government's commitment to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The declaration would now be reflected in the preamble to both the proposed impact assessment act and the proposed Canadian energy regulator act. The government, the minister, the agency, the Canadian energy regulator, and other federal authorities would also need to exercise their powers under the impact assessment act and the Canadian energy regulator act in a manner that respects the government's commitments with respect to the rights of indigenous peoples.

● (1305)

[*Translation*]

The amendments also add to the existing provisions, to ensure that indigenous knowledge is taken into account along with the science when projects are being assessed. The bill will now require more transparency in how the indigenous knowledge is used and will implement strong measures to protect this knowledge.

[*English*]

The standing committee has strengthened the public participation and transparency provisions across the legislation. The bill now clarifies that Canadians would have opportunities for meaningful participation throughout assessments. To support meaningful participation, a broad range of project information would need to be posted online, and there would be a requirement to maintain this information so that it stays accessible over time.

[*Translation*]

Furthermore, in response to reactions from environmental organizations, amendments would establish new safeguards so that Canadians can have confidence that the process is fair. For example, the bill clarifies that the project would be based on the impact assessment report and that decisions would also have to consider the main factors of public interest, including the project's contribution to sustainability.

[*English*]

The committee has also responded to industry's calls for more certainty. Amendments have been made to clarify that the government's public interest decision will be based on the assessment report and the consideration of specific factors, including positive and negative consequences. Other amendments include clarifying that comments must be provided during a time period specified by the impact assessment agency of Canada so that meaningful participation is ensured and balanced with a need for timely assessments. They would also enable the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to inform companies early on if a project is likely to have negative impacts, giving proponents an earlier opportunity to decide whether to continue with an impact assessment. Finally, the committee's amendments would improve the transition provisions set out in the bill.

[*Translation*]

The committee has strengthened Bill C-69 with these changes and others. By maintaining a balanced approach, the bill will further support environmental protection and reconciliation, and will also help increase investor confidence.

[*English*]

I am very proud of our government's work on this bill.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-69 addresses a key commitment we made during the 2015 election campaign. Our best rules adopt a balanced approach that takes into account the interests of people across Canada.

[*English*]

Once again, I want to recognize the essential contributions made by the standing committee, as well as the many Canadians who participated in consultations and made their voices heard. Thanks to their passion and commitment, I am confident that this bill will support the goals that I believe all of my colleagues share: a clean environment for our children, and a strong and growing economy.

I hope that all members of the House will join me in supporting this bill.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Liberal government is out to destroy our natural resources sector, not only with this bill but with the introduction of carbon taxes.

In terms of looking at advancements in how we process these things, Bill C-69 proposes a 180-day planning phase, which can be extended by 90 days by the minister or indefinitely by cabinet. There is actually no timeline for establishing the panel. Once it is finally established, the panel has to submit its report within 600 days, and that, again, can be extended by the minister for 90 days or indefinitely by cabinet.

How can my colleague stand in this place and actually imply that the bill would enhance the capability of bringing projects online?

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson:** Mr. Speaker, obviously, it is important to restore public trust in the processes so that projects can move forward. That was the primary focus of all the work that was done on Bill C-69.

One very important measure that has been introduced is related to the early planning phase. It is something that many resource-based organizations have called for to try to set the parameters and scope of when the environmental assessment would take place so that we can flag issues that need to be addressed early on and not flag them far down the road when they are much more difficult to address. Therefore, I would suggest that the hon. member may want to reflect that comment back to some of the natural resource organizations that asked for this.

With respect to the timelines, there are specific timelines that will provide certainty for proponents going forward. One of the amendments that the member has perhaps not seen is the lowering of the 600-day limit to 300 days. However, the focus is very much on providing timelines that will give certainty to proponents as to how this will proceed in a timely way.

● (1310)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his speech.

The NDP deplores that the Liberal government waited so long to propose a new environmental assessment process. What worries me about this new version is that the government did not explicitly state which projects must be assessed by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. Furthermore, Bill C-69 does not set out the criteria that will be used to determine whether an assessment is required. It is like buying a Ferrari that can only get up to second gear. What a shame.

Why did the government decide to do this?

[*English*]

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raised two separate issues. The first is that it did take time to bring this law forward. That is precisely because, knowing how important this is from an economic and environmental perspective, we knew we needed to have appropriate consultation with communities, individuals, companies, first nations, and environmental organizations. Therefore, we took the time to ensure that we actually got this right.

With respect to the question around projects, my hon. colleague is exactly right, in that there does need to be a definition that provides clarity about which projects will be included from a federal perspective, because, of course, there are projects that fall out of federal jurisdiction and are managed by the provinces. That regulatory piece is being managed through the project list that is out for consultation right now. I would certainly encourage the hon. member to weigh-in with his thoughts about what should be on and off the project list.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, earlier in his address, the member mentioned that this gave the Minister of Environment an opportunity to tell proponents quickly whether or not the projects could go ahead. Therefore, it is very similar to the process the government had with northern gateway, where it would quickly tell them that it was not going ahead. The same thing happened with energy east when it indicated it could go upstream and downstream. That was put it in there so that we would find out whether it could go ahead.

Then the government decided that it was going to put money into a project that was not necessary. Therefore, we have a situation where I am sure the government said, "Houston, we no longer have a problem", and this money will go into other countries so that we will import oil from the east coast. Has the government done an environmental assessment of the effects worldwide of the actions it has just taken?

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson:** Mr. Speaker, the focus of the conversation today is Bill C-69. I do not think the hon. member was actually speaking to the bill.

The focus is really very much on enhancing the integrity and transparency of the process, and restoring the public trust that was destroyed in 2012 by the Harper government when it introduced significant changes to the environmental assessment process, the Fisheries Act, and the Navigable Waters Act. This government is very focused on ensuring that we are in a position to address legitimate environmental concerns so that good projects can move forward in an expedited way to ensure that we are creating good middle-class jobs for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-69 at report stage. It has been a long time coming, since it was one of the major promises the Liberal Party made to Canadians during the last election.

In 2012, the environmental assessment process was scrapped, which undermined Quebeckers' and other Canadians' confidence in an independent, transparent, fair, balanced and scientific process based on facts. It was absolutely necessary that we change course and repair the damage done, but, unfortunately, the attempt is a bit late and, once again, half-hearted.

The parliamentary secretary said that the delay was in large part due to the consultations the Liberal government conducted and the fact that it created expert committees that made their own recommendations. I might believe that if the government had listened to the recommendations made by the experts and by the citizens of Canada. Unfortunately, that is not the case. It received a number of good suggestions and recommendations from the panels it created, but it rejected practically all of the suggestions from the environmental and scientific communities.

Despite the Liberals' rhetoric and their boasting about having collaborated, they rejected 99% of all amendments proposed by the opposition parties in committee in an effort to improve the bill. Almost all of the 33 amendments that were accepted in committee were proposed by Liberal members. I wanted to set the record straight.

We in the NDP believe that the Liberals took their time because they were actually pleased to be able to use the old Conservative system to quickly and quietly pass certain projects that they did not want people to look at too closely. I am thinking in particular of Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline project. As luck would have it, it is too late for the project to be assessed under the new system.

They tried to tinker with the existing process by adding criteria, some of which are not being met. Contrary to the clear promise made by the Prime Minister in British Columbia during the election campaign that no new pipeline projects would be accepted under Stephen Harper's environmental assessment process, the Liberals were far from thorough. Astonishingly, once again, they broke their promise and approved the project under an obsolete system that they criticized and said they did not trust.

Today, we are wondering how we can trust the government's decision. I do not even want to talk about the fact that we are spending who knows how many billions of dollars to purchase a pipeline that no one will want in 30 or 40 years because it will be worthless.

If we are in trouble up to our necks today because of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline scandal, it is in large part because, from the get-go, the Liberals did not fulfill their promise, did not do their job, and rushed the project through without the people's consent. They did not respect the first nations' territories, and the first nations are challenging the legitimacy of the pipeline in court and complaining that they are not getting their due respect and that no one is listening to them.

Last week, everyone, Liberal and New Democrat alike, was pleased with the support for my colleague's bill making the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples law in Canada. Just five days later, however, the Liberal government was already breaking its commitment by refusing to incorporate the declaration's principles into the Trans Mountain pipeline project. That is a betrayal. I have never seen a government flip-flop in such a way in under a week.

To get back to Bill C-69, we believe that there are three key issues. The first concerns how we determine which projects will be assessed.

● (1315)

The second is how we choose the expert panels to do the assessment, and whether they are truly independent. The third involves the minister's discretion when it comes to accepting or refusing the experts' recommendations and the results of the environmental assessment. We have a problem with these three issues.

First, and this is critical, there is no definition or criteria for determining which economic or energy development project will be subject to the new environmental assessment process. Astonishingly, the parliamentary secretary just conceded the point to me. If a project is not assessed, we can have the best process in the world, but it will not do us any good. If I buy a new computer and I leave it in the box in the corner of my office, I will not derive any benefit from it. We now fear the worst. The absence of clear criteria, commitments or a list of projects means that projects that will have an impact on territories and communities might very well not be subject to the new Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency process.

This discretion, this willingness to select projects as it sees fit in a seemingly random fashion is a huge problem for us as environmentalists, and for people who want to do serious work.

Second, there are many in the community who have serious doubts about the political independence of the panels that will be appointed to consult scientists, indigenous peoples and Canadians in general. Will these experts not simply be political hacks that will become complacent or shut their eyes to certain issues instead of doing their job?

We have seen the credibility of the National Energy Board suffer because of this type of cronyism. The Centre québécois du droit de l'environnement shares our concern; it made two statements that I would like to share. The first is, and I quote, "In order to restore confidence, project assessment panels must be truly independent from both industry and the government", and the second, "Bill [C-69] contains no mechanism for ensuring independence from political interference or avoiding partisan appointments or complacency in assessment panels, on whose recommendations the government now bases its final decisions".

We are not the only ones to say so. There is a fundamental problem with the fact that there is no guarantee, no structure for preventing politics and partisanship from affecting the assessments. There could be a considerable loss of credibility. That would be a shame, because it is really an institution based on trust. Here is a good example: the BAPE is a respected institution in Québec, and Quebeckers have confidence in it. We would like to see that model used, and we do not understand why, in its bill, the federal government did not include anything about accepting environmental assessment processes carried out in some of the provinces, including Québec, since the BAPE is recognized by all of the stakeholders and groups at the table.

The third issue involves the end of the process. Decisions are made regarding which projects will be assessed, experts are appointed to engage in consultations, scientists and local populations are listened to, the general mood is gauged and the indigenous peoples involved are given a chance to express themselves but, at the end of the day, the sitting minister is not bound by the assessment panel's recommendation. An assessment panel could say that there are too many dangers, too many risks, that the project is not acceptable to the population and that it is dangerous for the environment but, in the end, the minister could order that the project go ahead anyway.

Today, we have a Minister of Environment who says she is concerned about the environment. In my opinion, sometimes she is, sometimes she is not. However, this legislative provision will remain on the books for many Parliaments down the road. We think that this is extremely dangerous, because in the past we have seen a minister dismiss indigenous peoples, scientists and Canadians in general and opt for projects that pose a danger to our environment, our ecosystems and public health.

● (1320)

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie for his work on this issue and the speech he just gave.

I must admit that, as I read bills, as an opposition member, I too try to find positive points. Our role is to try to improve bills, not simply oppose them. I was thrilled to see that the traditional knowledge of first nations would be taken into consideration in the assessment process moving forward. However, I must also admit that I am deeply concerned about the Liberal government's decision to purchase a $4.5-billion pipeline this week and how it voted on a motion we moved last week.

Why should we believe that first nations' traditional knowledge really will be taken into account in the environmental assessment process?

● (1325)

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Trois-Rivières for his question.

I share his concern and his apprehension, because this government has said one thing and done the opposite all too often. Therefore, yes, this might look good on paper, but when we consider the decisions this government has actually made, it simply does not pass a reality check. It is constantly contradicting itself.

It is troubling, because if we do not have a mechanism in place to ensure that expert panels really are free of all political influence, it means that the government could easily ignore the lofty principles set out in Bill C-69, just as it is now ignoring the principle of informed, clear, and transparent consultation with indigenous peoples regarding the Trans Mountain pipeline, which the government just bought with our money.

[*English*]

**Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague has highlighted many of the challenges Bill C-69 presents. We also have concerns with Bill C-69, but they are concerns that investment in Canada is fleeing. In fact, over the last two years, we have seen the most dramatic drop in foreign investment the country has ever seen. We have seen it drop in half. That is because the investment environment in Canada is one that is no longer attractive and welcoming to the people who want to invest, especially in our resource industry.

Recently, the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain was purchased by the government, which shocked all of us. The last time that happened was under the Prime Minister's father, who was prime minister at the time. We know how that played out. Eventually Petro-Canada was returned to the private sector. It always should have been in private hands.

The member clearly is not a big supporter of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, yet we still have a robust oil industry in Canada. Canada has the third-largest oil reserves in the world. The world still is beating a path to our doorstep, wanting to buy our oil. Therefore, if the member is not supportive of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, does he then propose that we continue to use and increase the use of rail to transport oil? His own province has had a big problem at Lac-Mégantic with oil being transported by rail. Is that his solution to the way we get oil to markets outside of Canada?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

Obviously, I think that we do not share the same perspective. To the NDP, the energy sector is more than just oil and gas. We think that instead of debating pipelines or trains we should be changing the channel and looking at alternatives.

I thank my colleague for pointing out that the Liberal government foolishly decided out of the blue to spend billions of dollars of Canadians' money on a project that it never said it would undertake. Let us be clear, the $4.5 billion is just the beginning. No jobs will be created; this is just to buy existing equipment and infrastructure. Kinder Morgan was talking about investing at least an additional $7.4 billion to expand the pipeline. That brings us to $11.9 billion.

We are more interested in what we might do with renewable energies and future investments in jobs for today and tomorrow. The NDP is interested in being able to invest in an energy transition that is fair to workers.

**Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-69, which is very important.

Following the debate on the previous government's reform of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, I was very pleased to see that we are moving forward with this bill, which is the product of extensive consultation over the past two years.

I would like to recognize the hard work that the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development did on this file. The committee heard from more than 50 witnesses and received 150 briefs. Several hundred amendments were proposed, 130 of which were adopted. It is therefore clear that this was a very robust process, and I would like to commend my colleagues for the work they did in committee. I was very impressed by their willingness to consider possible improvements.

● (1330)

[*English*]

I would like to focus a bit on that aspect in particular. I note our chair and vice-chair are sitting opposite having a discussion, likely on topics related to the committee's work. This committee was charged with an important assignment, which was to ensure democracy functioned in the context of reviewing complex legislation.

If we rewind to 2012, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 was incorporated into the previous Conservative government's budget bill. It was an entire replacement of the previous Environmental Assessment Act. It was brought through the omnibus budget bill and there were no hearings specifically on the bill to reform the environmental assessment rules. That was criticized across the country, from indigenous communities to environmental groups. Even municipal actors were literally appalled at the anti-democratic approach taken to amend that law.

Therefore, the pendulum swings back a bit. We knew and committed in the previous campaign to reforming that legislation. Thankfully, pursuant to many months of consultation, a better starting point, which was Bill C-69, was achieved. However, when it went to committee, to the committee's great credit, all sorts of analysis was brought to bear from members opposite , from the New Democratic Party, the Green Party, and the Conservative Party. Every party that participated, with the possible exception of the Bloc, independent Bloc, and the CCF, brought forward an amendment that was voted upon and approved, which is a remarkable achievement.

It is also important to note that the government, in particular the Minister of Environment, the Minister of Transport, and the Minister of Natural Resources have commented positively on the amendments brought forward by the committee, on which we will subsequently be voting.

One hundred and fifty amendments were made. The government is responding positively to the fact that these changes are being brought in to ensure openness and transparency, improve public participation, better engage indigenous communities, and to provide greater predictability and certainty for our businesses and those who wish to bring good projects forward. The fact that agreement could be reached on 150 amendments is a tremendous statement and says a lot about the state of democracy right now. That is a really important thing.

[*Translation*]

I would like to first look at some of the amendments, particularly those related to reconciliation and navigable waters.

With regard to reconciliation, I was very proud to work with my colleagues, including opposition members, to propose amendments that would incorporate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into the bill. That is very important and our government supports enshrining the declaration in law through Bill C-262, which will soon become law.

I would like to congratulate those who worked on Bill C-69, because including the declaration in future impact assessments across the country will be very good for reconciliation and for the development of nation-to-nation relationships.

I would also like to mention how the bill now provides for calling on indigenous peoples' knowledge and expertise when impact assessments are conducted. That will help to improve future project analyses. We need to improve our way of working with indigenous peoples on impact assessments.

Protection of waterways is another very important aspect, and we all know the former government scrapped several provisions protecting navigable waters. Since 2015, the government has been working very hard to improve those protections because waterways and navigation rights are protected not only by statute but also under common law.

● (1335)

[*English*]

The protections for navigable waters are of crucial importance to Canadians, and certainly to the constituents I represent in the Pontiac.

With respect to navigation, very important changes were brought by the committee to ensure water flows would be protected. That is a really crucial piece of the puzzle. Why? Because many Canadian communities, indigenous groups, and paddling groups were concerned that projects might move forward and would not receive the necessary scrutiny, that the law would not necessarily enable protection of the flows of water that would go down various waterways, whether that is the Ottawa River, the Gatineau River, the St. Lawrence Seaway, or other major waterways. That is a key point, and I am very proud our committee brought forward those amendments.

Overall, I would like to conclude by suggesting that beyond the hyperbole, beyond all of the easy, partisan criticism that has been lobbed from the other side, at the end of the day, Canadians are looking for a stronger process that builds trust when good projects come forward and ensures the independence of decision-makers in the context of evaluating projects. We need the public to not only know that a good analysis is being done, but that this analysis is being done independently, on the basis of solid, hard evidence, and on the basis of the engagement of Canada's indigenous peoples.

I am really proud of the work our government has done. Bill C-69 is a good starting point. The committee worked very hard to achieve improvements on it. I commend the government for its positive reaction to the changes brought forward by the standing committee.

**Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that member is an invaluable member of our environment committee, and I enjoy working with him.

He did mention the navigable waters piece in Bill C-69. We need to make it very clear in the House that navigable waters is about navigation. It has nothing to do with the environment.

The previous government made those changes to the navigable waters act because government officials with sidearms were accosting farmers in fields who had dug a ditch that was classified as a waterway. They told our farmers not to touch or clean that ditch because they would be breaking the law. Imagine how farmers reacted. In my City of Abbotsford, the community I represent, farmers were livid about how the government approached this.

Another reason we moved forward with changes to the navigable waters legislation was because it was about navigation, not about the environment. The Liberal government seems to conflate those and has taken the navigable waters legislation and thrown it in the middle of Bill C-69, which is essentially an environmental piece of legislation. Does the member not understand that navigable waters is about protecting navigation? It should not cover minor waterways.

Why is his government so intent on changing and trying to remediate a piece of legislation that was actually working very well for those impacted by it?

● (1340)

**Mr. William Amos:** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to work with the member opposite who represents Abbotsford. I have enjoyed many positive moments on our standing committee and have great respect for the work he does.

With all due respect, I would refer the member to an opinion editorial that I had published in *The Globe and Mail* in 2012, where I laid out the critique of the previous government's changes to navigation law in Canada. When the changes were made, Canadians' ability to navigate was still protected by the common law, but most of their statutory rights previously protected by Transport Canada were stripped away. The statutory protections for navigation were stripped away, leaving the public with common law protections only.

I take the point that there is a distinction to be drawn between navigation protections and environmental protections. That is an absolutely valid point to make. However there is no doubt that in past, environmental assessment laws, which Canadian waters were subject to prior to the previous government, the required navigational permitting triggered an environmental assessment. That is how it used to work. The Conservative government stripped all of that away, so we needed to find a new way to bring back navigation protections and a robust impact assessment regime. That is what Bill C-69 seeks to achieve.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Pontiac mentioned that the committee had agreed to make an amendment to Bill C-69 with regards to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. It amended the preamble, but that preamble is non-binding, so it was a meaningless gesture by the government.

I will bring to the attention of all members that the member for Edmonton Strathcona has brought forward report stage amendments, notably, Motions Nos. 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 13. Given that the member across the way voted last week in support of Bill C-262, which strives to bring the laws of Canada into harmony with UNDRIP, will he be consistent this week and support those amendments and live up to what he did last week?

**Mr. William Amos:** Mr. Speaker, the issue of incorporating the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into Bill C-69 was an important one. We had lengthy discussions during the committee proceedings. We on this side of the House most certainly feel that incorporating indigenous rights and ensuring they are respected and that the constitutional protections afforded to indigenous rights are given pride of place in this legislation is of absolutely fundamental importance. That is exactly what we achieved.

Many amendments were brought to Bill C-69 in relation to indigenous rights, including but not limited to UNDRIP, and I mentioned others related to traditional knowledge. Members on this side of the House are extremely proud of how that was achieved.

● (1345)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to that brief exchange about including the Navigation Protection Act in Bill C-69 and changes made to the act.

During a previous term here in the House of Commons, I had the opportunity to be a member of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, where we discussed the Navigation Protection Act and the waterways that were protected by the previous government's bill to amend the Navigation Protection Act. At the time, nobody complained or called for changed. The government decided to make changes in response to pressure from groups that thought the law was lacking, but it was not actually lacking.

There were no complaints, no requests to add new waterways to the list that had been authorized and announced in the Navigation Protection Act. Sometimes, people want to make changes for reasons other than protecting waterways. They might be trying to please certain lobby groups. That is what happened at the time, and we need to remember that.

Bill C-69 is an omnibus bill that enacts the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, amends the Navigation Protection Act and makes amendments to several other acts. It is another major bill, because it has a considerable impact on how large projects will be environmentally assessed in Canada.

Despite the government's promises of openness and transparency, Bill C-69 is one of the 38 bills for which the government decided to cut short discussions, muzzle the opposition and refuse to hear each of the members of the opposition express his or her intentions. We reached the pinnacle this week but, last week, in the House, in just three days, the government introduced three motions to cut debate short by gagging members who had something to say and wanted to represent their fellow citizens.

A similar thing happened in the committee that studied Bill C-69. They refused to discuss the opposition's amendments, then rejected them and proposed almost identical amendments so that they could say that they were the government's idea and not that of the opposition. If that is not arrogance, I do not know what arrogance is. We see it all the time in the House, and it is only getting worse.

I remind the House that the opposition was gagged 38 times, including 5 times in three days last week. If the trend continues, the same thing will happen in the coming weeks, even if there are only a few weeks left in this session. The government is simply incapable of working together with the opposition parties to pass its bills.

Consequently, it is left to support Bill C-69 all by itself. The Conservatives, the NDP and the Green Party are all against the bill—not for the same reasons, but they are all against it. Once again, everything is about optics with this government. Despite its promises of openness and transparency, it refuses to hear the recommendations of elected members on this side of the House, and it is alone in passing a bill that will have a major impact on the economy.

I would like to remind my colleagues that, on this side of the House, even if we make up less than half of all elected members, we represent more than half of the country's electorate, so when the government constantly breaks its promises, it is disrespecting all of those Canadians we represent as members of the opposition. It can say whatever it wants to make itself look good, but when it comes time to do the work, it fails across the board.

The words fade away and the Liberals' true nature emerges. The Liberals' promise to run small deficits: gone; the Liberals' promise to bring in electoral reform and change the voting system: gone; the Liberals' promise to increase transparency: gone; the Liberals' promise to no longer muzzle the opposition: gone; and the Liberals' promise not to concede one more litre of milk to the Americans through NAFTA: gone.

● (1350)

We learned about this on the weekend. In a speech on NBC, which has a large American audience, the Prime Minister, perhaps thinking that we would not see the show, declared that the Canadian government was prepared to be more flexible, to give Americans access to Canada's milk market. Unfortunately, some Canadians watch NBC and heard the Prime Minister make this promise. It was rather shocking, because Liberals on the other side of the House have been repeating, over and over, since 2015 and even earlier that they will fully protect supply management.

The Liberals will protect supply management, since they created it. The Prime Minister said that they would unanimously protect supply management. I am not sure what "unanimously" means, but the Prime Minister is the one who said it. Meanwhile, when he thinks that Canadians are not listening, he says the opposite.

After all that, the government is asking for our trust with respect to Bill C-69. Since this morning, the Liberals have repeated their talking points so many times that, in my opinion, they do not see the real consequences of the bill. They are too busy repeating their talking points to dig deeper and identify what is wrong with Bill C-69.

The first big problem is that the Liberals are creating new regulatory burdens for project proponents and adding a carbon tax, which makes Canada less and less competitive when it comes to attracting investment. None of this has improved environmental protection one bit. We know that $100 billion in planned investments have already left Canada. I will repeat today, in this chamber, that the Conservatives will continue to oppose costly regulations that negatively impact Canada's jobs, economic growth, and international competitiveness.

There is nothing in Bill C-69 to help increase investors' confidence or to attract new investment to Canada, especially in the resource sector. We know that Canadian firms are already facing significant challenges, whereas the United States is moving forward with its plan to reduce regulations, cut taxes, and invest in coal-fired and natural-gas-fired electricity in order to cut energy costs.

Canadian businesses deserve a government that works with them, not against them. Canadian businesses deserve a government that will work with them to protect the environment, and not against them by ensuring that there are no projects. The government would not have to worry about the environment if there were no projects. That is the reality.

The government's approach to fighting climate change needs to be realistic. It needs to restore a balance between protecting the environment and growing the economy.

Another source of concern is the fact that cabinet is giving itself life-and-death powers over major projects, such as the power to appoint people and the power to say yes or no to projects throughout the process. We know what the Liberals can do when they manage a project, or rather, when they mismanage one. I am referring to Kinder Morgan. The project was approved 18 months ago, but the Liberals sat on their hands all that time instead of putting it in motion.

The Liberal government has known for 11 months that British Columbia is opposed to this project. However, the Prime Minister only dropped by briefly on his way to England, probably so his jet could fill up on fuel for the rest of the trip.

He took advantage of his layover to meet with two premiers. What was the result? Diddly-squat. This government's solution was to nationalize Kinder Morgan, making all Canadians joint owners of a pipeline for which they paid $4.5 billion.

Does this mean that the project will go ahead? No, because we have only bought some pipes. We have bought $4.5 billion in pipes. The company's executives were so proud of what they pulled off that they received $1.5 million each for the fast one they pulled on the Government of Canada, and I could have used a different word. This means that we will have to invest even more in order for the project to go ahead, if it ever does.

I believe it is clear that something crucial was overlooked in Bill C-69. Yes, we have to protect the environment. Yes, we have to ensure that projects go ahead while respecting our environment so that our young people will have an environment in the future that they can enjoy and will benefit from our natural resources. However, the bill should not thwart further investment in Canada by ensuring environmental protection while doing absolutely nothing else.

[*English*]

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring the discussion back to Bill C-69. It is great to work together with my friend, the member for Mégantic—L'Érable, on the agriculture committee, but today we are talking about energy.

This morning, I met with Electra and the City of Guelph to discuss a technology and smart grid opportunity that can help us move toward our goal of having 90% renewable energy generated by 2030. However, we have to coordinate with the Department of Environment and Climate Change, with Natural Resources Canada, and with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. Therefore, an integrated all-of-government approach needs to be taken, such as what is being proposed in the legislation.

Could the hon. member comment on how this legislation could help bring forward clean technology projects with a complex basis, connecting different departments, versus the omnibus legislative rhetoric we have been hearing from the other side?

● (1355)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I have been saying from the start. When businesses want to innovate, when they have to innovate, when they want to take concrete steps toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping us meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets, the government needs to step up and help them. The government needs to take regulatory obstacles out of their way. It needs to get rid of the notorious carbon tax, which might deter people from ever investing in Canada because they are going to figure out pretty quickly that they can make more money investing where there is less regulation, where it is easier, and where there are lower taxes, by which I mean in the United States. I really do not see how Bill C-69 offers any incentive to businesses or makes it attractive to invest in Canada. The people we have been consulting and talking to about Bill C-69 all say that it will make the process take longer and increase the regulatory burden. That will make it harder to accomplish projects like the one my Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food colleague just talked about.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my fellow vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food went through some of the trials and tribulations that the opposition parties had with the bill at committee. The member for Edmonton Strathcona moved many amendments. There was a situation where the amendment deadline passed before the committee could receive all the submissions. It was a really rushed process for such a very important bill. The theme of the bill is very important.

According to the way the Liberals voted last week, does the member think they will be consistent on Bill C-262 and support the report stage amendments that incorporated UNDRIP provisions into the bill?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I doubt I will have a better answer for my colleague, but I can talk about another of this government's inconsistencies.

Bill C-57 is another bill that was kind of rammed down parliamentarians' throats. It includes a definition of sustainability that reads as follows:

[*English*]

Sustainability is defined as "the ability to protect the environment, contribute to the social and economic well-being of the people of Canada and preserve their health in a manner that benefits present and future generations."

[*Translation*]

That was in C-57.

[*English*]

Sadly, in Bill C-69, direct economic consideration is now missing from the extensive list of factors to consider.

[*Translation*]

That is therefore not the first inconsistency we see from the Liberals, and I somehow doubt it will be the last.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### BIOSPHERE RESERVES

**Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, I am pleased to be co-hosting, with members from all parties, a reception on the Hill recognizing Canada's 18 UNESCO biosphere reserves. These 18 biosphere reserves have the distinction of including both some of the most pristine ecosystems in our country and incredibly dedicated stewards of our lands and waters.

Located on the southwest shore of the Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories, the community of Deline is home to our country's newest biosphere reserve, Tsá Tué. Designated by UNESCO in 2016, Tsá Tué is the first biosphere reserve in the world to be 100% indigenous governed.



I invite all of my colleagues to join me in the Speaker's lounge after question period in celebration of our country's great biosphere reserves from coast to coast to coast.

*Mahsi cho .*

* * *

### JUSTICE

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice claims that Bill C-75 has nothing to do with sentencing. Bill C-75 makes serious indictable offences prosecutable by way of summary conviction. Therefore, instead of a sentence of up to 10 years if prosecuted by way of summary conviction, the maximum sentence would be two years less a day or as little as a mere fine. That is right. Under Bill C-75, a maximum sentence could go from 10 years to two years less a day.

Contrary to the minister's claims, Bill C-75 has everything to do with sentencing and everything to do with watering down sentences for the most serious of offences.

Bill C-75 is a terrible bill for victims, it is a terrible bill for public safety, and it is why Conservatives will work to defeat Bill C-75.

* * *

● (1400)

### SEA CADET PROGRAM

**Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a proud former Royal Canadian sea cadet who attended for five summers HMCS *Quadra* with the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corp UNDAUNTED and NLCC Captain Jackson, I am honoured to stand and celebrate one of the greatest youth programs in Canada.

This year is the 100th anniversary of the sea cadet program with the Navy League of Canada. It continues to train young Canadians, from ages 12 to19, in seamanship, music, discipline, leadership, and life.

I would like to thank the thousands of volunteers who make this program possible in the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps, like JTCVC, Qu'appelle, Daerwood, Swiftsure, Dawson, Transcona, Crusader, and Navy League Cadet Corps JRK Millen, Stan Hawitt, and Lord Selkirk. These volunteers give up free time, including weeknights and weekends, so young people from all social backgrounds can enjoy and learn together in this significant life-changing program.

I thank them for their contributions to Canadian society and helping to make Canada a better place.

Ready, Aye Ready.

* * *

### WORLD OCEANS DAY

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize World Oceans Day. This past weekend, I was pleased to celebrate World Oceans Day on the Gorge Waterway in my riding, and I offer my congratulations to the organizers of this great annual event.

The recovery of the Gorge offers both inspiration from the success of volunteer-led efforts to restore both salmon runs and swimming to the Gorge, but also a cautionary tale in the ongoing vigilance so necessary to protect this inlet. However, now, when we are facing a future with more plastic than fish in the water, it is time for the federal government to act to protect our oceans, starting with an immediate phase-out of single-use plastics.

If we are to stop global warming, we must end subsidies to fossil fuels, like the government's wrong-headed decision to buy the Kinder Morgan pipeline. This project is not just an impending climate change calamity, but also a major threat to west coast marine life and ecosystems on which our local economy and our very future depend.

On World Oceans Day, I stand with my constituents in their commitment to protecting our oceans and ask the Liberals to do the world to do the same.

* * *

[*Translation*]

## ERNEST GASSER

**Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Ernest Gasser, a pioneer in sustainable farming and a great businessman in the Pike River region, passed away on April 12, at the age of 84.

He arrived and settled in Quebec in 1951, where he founded his farm. Today, Fermes Gasser is owned and operated by the fourth generation of his family. He founded what is today one of the largest farms in Quebec.

Ernest was forward-thinking and always on the lookout for new farming techniques. He was very attuned to the changes in mentality in the industry and was especially sensitive to the potential environmental impact of farming. Ernest was chairman of the board of the Bedford credit union and member of the board of the greater Bedford Coopérative de solidarité santé.

On behalf of the Brome—Missisquoi community, I offer my condolences to his wife, Ilse, his children Michael, Ernest, William, Doris, and Carol, and all his family and friends. We thank Ernest for his devotion and his vision for the community, the region, the province, and the country.

* * *

[*English*]

## RAMADAN

**Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Ramadan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar. Muslims across the world approach this holiday with much devotion and sincerity.

Ramadan is the time for thoughtfulness, spiritual reflection, and acts of kindness. Those who are able will fast, dusk to dawn, as one of the five pillars of Islam while devoting themselves to worship and prayer.

Let this be a time for all Canadians, regardless of their cultural or religious background, to join with those celebrating Ramadan by remembering the less fortunate and celebrating acts of kindness and charity.

For everyone in Canada and around the world observing the holy month of Ramadan, I wish them a Ramadan *Mubarak*.

* * *

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

## ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY

**Mr. Nicola Di Iorio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a country is above all the expression of a people. Today, we are celebrating a nation with ancient roots transposed into a civilization spanning millennia. Its people used their knowledge, ingenuity, creativity, dedication, and emotions to create the biggest brands in the world.

Italians have built an astounding number of globally beloved brands, including Ducati, Ferrari, Vespa, La Molisana, Carrozzeria Ghia, Nutella, Compagnolo, Loro Piana, Cinzano, Armani, Barilla, Beretta, Mapei, Gianfranco Ferré, Ermenelgido Zegna, Tic Tac, Prada, Panerai, Piaggio, and Pirelli, to name just a few.

As I pay tribute to them today, I invite all my colleagues to celebrate the *Festa della Repubblica*.

*Viva l'Italia.*

* * *

[*English*]

## WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

**Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans. Stark examples exist of the damage plastic causes to our ecosystems. Just this past weekend, a pilot whale in Thailand died from starvation, having swallowed 80 plastic bags. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident.

Today, on World Environment Day, we can all commit to taking action to beat plastic pollution.

As Canadians, we know the importance of protecting our beautiful oceans and our pristine rivers and lakes for future generations. As Canada hosts the G7 summit later this week, I am proud we are taking leadership by putting environment and climate change at the forefront of the agenda.

I encourage all Canadians to join the conversation this World Environment Day and share online the actions they are taking by using #beatplasticpollution. Here is a challenge for you, Mr. Speaker, and for all Canadians, "If you can't reuse it, refuse it".

[*Translation*]

## CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in 2009, a certain organization lost its federal funding due to its support for the terrorist groups Hamas and Hezbollah. That decision was upheld by the Federal Court of Canada in 2014.

However, we learned today that the Canadian Arab Federation is receiving funding through the federal Canada summer jobs program, with the help of a Liberal MP from Toronto. What troubles me is that this is apparently not an isolated case. Many Liberal MPs and even some ministers have approved funding for such organizations.

[*English*]

The fact is that many Liberal MPs and ministers have approved organizations with ties to terrorism, anti-Semitism, and violent homophobia, this is despite introducing their attestation.

[*Translation*]

Are the Liberals condoning this unacceptable situation, or are they just grossly incompetent?

* * *

[*English*]

## OVARIAN CANCER

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every day in Canada, five women die from ovarian cancer. Women diagnosed with ovarian cancer and their families deserve to have access to new therapies to improve their odds of survival. With no screening test and symptoms that can easily be confused with less serious conditions, ovarian cancer is usually detected at later stages.

[*Translation*]

The harmful impact of this disease can no longer be ignored. It is time to give ovarian cancer sufferers in Canada a better chance of survival.

We can change the course of this disease and even stop it in its tracks, but we need help to ensure that women living with ovarian cancer today get to live better, longer lives.

[*English*]

Please join me in helping Ovarian Cancer Canada and the women for whom it works by rising awareness and by joining the parliamentary women's caucus immediately after question period in the parliamentary dining room for a reception.

* * *

## SHAD

**Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work being done by an exceptional non-profit. Since 1980, SHAD has provided an award-winning enrichment and entrepreneurial program that develops critical skills for young Canadians. SHAD builds leaders within our communities. Its program focuses on science, technology, and civic engagement.

A few alumni of this program include entrepreneur Michele Romanow, the youngest person to appear on *Dragons' Den*; Darlene Lim, a NASA scientist currently studying the exploration of Mars; and Jason Farris, an executive for the NHL's Dallas Stars. SHAD has prepared these young leaders at many universities, including the University of Waterloo.

Today is SHAD's day on the Hill, and I hope many parliamentarians will meet with its representatives and talk about its programs.

I congratulate SHAD on its continued contribution towards the leadership development of Canadian youth.

* * *

● (1410)

## TAIWAN

**Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the World Health Assembly meetings concluded last week, I rise to call for Taiwan to be included once again in all World Health Organization events moving forward. I believe that the enjoyment of good health is a universal right of every human being, which is why I successfully lobbied for Taiwan's inclusion in WHO events during my term as minister of health.

Epidemics know no borders. Taiwan's absence from the WHO creates a significant gap in global co-operation on public health safety and disease prevention. Taiwan hosts 60,000 Canadians on its soil, so any outbreak of infectious diseases, such as SARS in 2003, would affect Taiwanese as well as Canadians living in the country.

It is morally wrong for any country or organization to ignore the health and well-being of the 23 million Taiwanese people and prevent them from sharing health information. Therefore, I call upon the Minister of Health to end her silence and to start to advocate for the inclusion of Taiwan in the World Health Assembly.

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[*Translation*]

## GENDER EQUALITY

**Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as it hosts the G7 in Charlevoix, our government continues to show it is a leader on gender equality.

We are presiding over the 2018 summit, and one innovation is the new Gender Equality Advisory Council. This council will work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment across all areas of the G7's work.

Canada is one of the fastest-growing economies in the G7, so we must ensure that Canadians' talents are put to good use. We know that investing in women strengthens the economy for everyone.

I am very proud to be part of a government that places so much importance on feminist issues, and I believe that through this G7 summit, our government will inspire all the countries to follow suit and embrace feminist policies.

* * *

[*English*]

## OVARIAN CANCER

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I had no idea that ovarian cancer was the most fatal women's cancer until Ovarian Cancer Canada told me that virtually no one lives long enough to lobby or fundraise for it. The fatality rate is terrible. More than half the women diagnosed die in five years. There is no screening and no vaccine, and there have been no treatment breakthroughs for 25 years and no outcome improvements for 50 years.

Katrina died of it this spring. She was a professional geologist and the best, most grounded young woman ever. She made waves, got things done, and brought people together. On Sunday, her son Calvin turned three. Before she died, she said to her mom, Sabine Jessen, "Don't let Calvin forget me."

That is up to us. Research funding is a fraction of what other cancers get, and few survive this disease in order to lobby and fundraise for it. Let us give the $10-million budget that Ovarian Cancer Canada is asking for. Let us donate and find a cure.

* * *

## WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me quote the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

> Unfortunately, so often when persons with disabilities get a job, receive a raise or work extra hours, taxes and clawbacks of income-tested benefits leave them poorer.

This is why the CNIB supports the opportunity for workers with disabilities act:

> It would require Finance Canada to calculate how much workers with disabilities lose for every $1,000 they earn. If they lose more than they gain, the Finance Minister would be required to consider changes to federal tax and benefits to fix the problem. Also, the bill would require provinces do the same, as a condition of receiving billions in federal transfers.
>
> Federal conditions for federal money are nothing new. To get federal health transfers, provinces must honour the five principles of the Canada Health Act. To get the Canada Social Transfer, provinces are banned from imposing minimum residency requirements on social assistance.

The CNIB further notes that infrastructure transfers even come with the requirement that provinces put up federal government signage at project sites, and concludes by asking that members vote in favour of this legislation in order to enhance work opportunities "for people with all abilities".

* * *

● (1415)

[*Translation*]

## CANADA-ITALY DAY

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to come celebrate the third Canada-Italy day on Parliament Hill this evening and to participate in Italian Heritage Month this June.

[*English*]

I would like to pay tribute to the sacrifices of the trailblazers who came before us, including the nearly 2,000 men listed on the Italian Fallen Workers Memorial, and to my parents and that generation of immigrants who sacrificed so much.

I am fortunate that, along with my wife Rose, we can pass this pride on to our daughters Eliana and Natalia, and the entire Italian-Canadian community can continue to educate, reflect, and celebrate our heritage. I look forward to celebrating my Italian heritage with everyone this evening, and to recognizing the community's vast contributions to Canada.

[*Member spoke in Italian*]

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# ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we understand that the government wants to consult Canadians on countermeasures for the U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs, but Canadian manufacturers are already losing business opportunities because of trade decisions being made in Washington. They are having to put some of their activities on hold.

Why is the Prime Minister waiting three weeks to impose these retaliatory measures when U.S. tariffs are already in effect?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs are completely unacceptable, even more so because they are imposed on the preposterous pretext of national security. Canada is fighting back to support Canadian workers and the businesses that employ them.

From coast to coast, a very strong team Canada effort is pulling together, except, apparently, for the Leader of the Opposition. Let me quote *The Hamilton Spectator*, which states, "Apparently nothing, not even pulling together in a national crisis, tops partisan sniping" for the Conservative leader. I invite him here and now—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister told steelworkers all across the country that he had got them a reprieve on steel tariffs in March. However, he knew then that it was only a reprieve. He has had three months to prepare countermeasures, but now he claims that he needs more time to consult.

Canada's steel industry employs over 23,000 workers and supports 100,000 indirect jobs. The U.S. tariffs on steel are affecting those workers today.

I will ask again. Why is the Prime Minister waiting three weeks to impose steel and aluminum countermeasures, when those U.S. tariffs are in effect right now?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the criticism of Conservative partisanship is universal. This matter is deeply personal to the 1,200 workers at Evraz steel in Saskatchewan. As the *Regina Leader-Post* said today, "in the face of what could be a serious threat to the national and provincial economies, one might hope someone who aspires to be prime minister would holster petty partisanship for the sake of nation." That is good advice.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pointing out the Liberals' failure to implement these tariffs today is in the national interest. It is always in the national interest for the opposition to hold the government to account when it does not stand up for Canadian workers. We will never apologize for doing our job holding it to account.

It is not just on trade that the Liberals are letting Canadians down. We have learned this weekend that executives at Kinder Morgan will receive over a million dollars in bonuses for leaving Canada's energy sector. Why is the Prime Minister giving bonuses to U.S. executives for pulling out of Canada's economy?

● (1420)

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, not only will the opposition leader not defend Canada, but he will not defend Canadian workers. We are building an economy and creating thousands of jobs by helping to get our resources to international markets. That is exactly what we want to do to make sure this project goes forward with the great people who need to actually deliver on this project.

We stand behind Canadian workers. We wish the Conservatives would too.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when Kinder Morgan first applied for this project, it was one of four proposed pipelines committed to investing billions of dollars in Canada. Now, after just two and a half years of Liberal mismanagement, there is only one left. I could understand an American politician paying executives bonuses for taking investment out of Canada into the U.S., but can the Prime Minister explain why he is paying those very same executives $1.5 million in bonuses to pull out of Canada?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to be clear, I will not comment on what a private company does with its employees.

What I will say, which is particularly important, is that this project needs to get done. This is another example of the Conservatives actually not caring about workers in Alberta and workers in British Columbia, and not caring about the up to $15 billion a year we could add to our economy.

The Conservatives did not get it done when they were in power; we are going to get it done.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister likes to pretend to stand up for supply management, but he is all talk.

In an interview broadcast in the United States last weekend, the Prime Minister said he is willing to allow Americans greater access to markets that are currently supply managed. Clearly, the Prime Minister is incapable of standing up for our farmers, including our farmers in Saguenay.

Why is he willing to make concessions on supply management as soon as he gets the chance?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that our government is strongly committed to protecting supply management.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, our entire cabinet, and our trade negotiators have always been very clear on this: we will protect supply management. We will protect the interests of our rural communities.

* * *

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that flexibility seems like a major step backward and we are scared.

Yesterday was a national day of action to stop the Kinder Morgan buyout. Thousands of Canadians showed up in front of Liberal members' offices to send a clear message: our money should be invested in a fair energy transition, for the jobs of today and tomorrow, and not to buy an old pipeline and give bonuses to the CEOs of a Texan company.

Why is the Prime Minister insisting on moving forward with this risky project despite growing opposition from the public and first nations communities?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is because it is in our national interest. It is truly something that is very important for our economy. We can improve our economy to the tune of $15 billion a year with opportunities to access international markets for our national resource and, in the meantime, we can create roughly 15,000 jobs across the country. It is very important for our economy and it is very important for our future.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals supported the NDP's bill to harmonize our laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, when it comes to applying the principles of that logic to a pipeline, the Liberals do what they do best: break their word. We cannot pick and choose when indigenous peoples have rights or not.

Why is the government insisting on going against the nations that are taking a stand against this pipeline that is hazardous to their communities?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, there was unprecedented consultation with indigenous communities, layered on month after month, because of the failure of the Harper government to consult indigenous communities in the northern gateway case.

Not only was there consultation, there was real accommodation. The accommodation takes the form of an unprecedented $1.5 billion oceans protection plan that will be world class. We are proud of that. Why are they not?

* * *

## INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, throughout history, the crown has always found an excuse to ignore indigenous peoples.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is our chance to finally put an end to that history. Last week, the Prime Minister championed this declaration, which includes free, prior, and informed consent.

Why, then, is his government voting against honouring that historic declaration today?

• (1425)

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the hon. member will also know that for the first time in Canadian history, there will be co-development with indigenous communities along the Trans Mountain line.

This co-development will mean that the prosperity that will come to all of Canada, because of the energy development that is so important for the future of the nation, will be shared with indigenous communities. A better life for their children, better education, better access to skills, and community investments, we believe in all of those things. Why do they not?

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, do you see what they are doing? Do you see how they are trying to pit one first nation group against another?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Watch, watch. It is the oldest trick in the colonial book, the oldest trick that has been used—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order. Do I have to remind members that they will often hear things from other members, sometimes from other parties, sometimes from their own party perhaps, that they do not like? Of course, we want to have one person speak at a time. Therefore, we need a little order so that I can hear the question. Then I look forward to hearing the answer, and so forth.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley has the floor.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, watch what the Liberals just did. They said they believe in indigenous rights and title, but only if indigenous people agree with them. They believe in this as a principle, but only when the principle works out for Liberals.

What we have seen done through generations to indigenous peoples in this country is government pitting one group against another and respecting rights only when it is convenient for the government. In just a few minutes we are going to vote on the application of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in this House. What are the Liberals actually going to do about it?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that these projects are, by their very nature, divisive. They are even divisive within political parties. Are you sowing dissent between the premiers of Alberta and British Columbia?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order. I have to remind the hon. Minister of Natural Resources that when you say "you" in this place, normally you are referring to the Speaker. I hope he was not meaning to do that. At any rate, I would ask him to direct his comments to the Chair.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Jim Carr:** Mr. Speaker, I was not intending to do that. However, the hon. member knows that there will be different views within communities.

May I ask the hon. member if he has consulted with the 43 communities up and down the line, including 33 communities in British Columbia who stand to benefit from this project?

* * *

[*Translation*]

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister and his ministers are in Quebec, they tell anyone who will listen that they are going to protect supply management.

In Saguenay, the Prime Minister said, "We will not make any concessions when it comes to supply management."

However, the Prime Minister said on NBC that he had suggested concessions around giving Americans access to the dairy market. In his words, "We were moving towards flexibility in those areas that I thought was very, very promising."

Can the Prime Minister tell us just how flexible he was? Did he give up 2%, 3%, 4%, or even 10% to the Americans at the expense of our dairy, egg, and poultry producers?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is firmly committed to defending supply management.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture, and our entire caucus are staunch defenders of supply management. Unlike the Conservative Party's innovation critic, we believe in it.

We will continue to protect the interests of our rural communities.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week's talking points are old news. Claiming to want to protect supply management is one thing. Committing to not opening new loopholes is another.

In Saguenay, the Prime Minister said, "The Liberal Party created supply management and it will always unanimously defend it".

Why say one thing to voters in Saguenay and another thing to the Americans?

My question is simple. Did the Liberal government abandon Canada's dairy producers and break its promise to fully support supply management, yes or no?

● (1430)

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government remains fully committed to defending supply management.

The Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister, and our entire team are staunch defenders of supply management.

I urge my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable to have a long chat with his colleague from Beauce on supply management. Whether the Conservatives believe in it or not, we believe in it and will continue to stand up for it.

* * *

[*English*]

## CARBON PRICING

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, agricultural producers in Canada have spoken up loud and clear to tell the Liberals that they do not support their carbon tax. In fact, the President of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan said that a carbon tax adds a huge cost to producers who are already facing tight margins. The agriculture minister's failure to recognize farmers' opposition to this carbon tax is troubling and is undermining his already diminished credibility.

Why can the minister not admit that he is wrong? Farmers do not want your Liberal carbon tax.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** The opposition House leader, I think, is acknowledging that she is supposed to direct her comments to the Chair. I appreciate that.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is well aware that farmers are great stewards of the land. In fact, farmers have always been protecting the environment and have played a vital role in the fight against climate change. That is why gasoline and diesel fuel for on-farm use is exempt under the federal backstop. Unlike the previous Conservative government, the Harper government, which cut over $700 million from agriculture, our government has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in agriculture and agricultural research.

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, every time I talk to farmers they are telling me how much they miss Gerry Ritz.

Let us face the facts. Farmers do not want a carbon tax because it is going to hurt them and their families. It is going to add a cost to everything, and the minister does not seem to understand that. From the price of seed and input supplies, to simply driving into town to pick up groceries, or taking their kids to the dentist, the family farm is going to hurt. Therefore, will the minister tell farmers how much the carbon tax is going to cost their families?

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, farmers and ranchers are responsible stewards of the land, developing best management practices and innovative technologies, such as zero-till farming to reduce carbon pollution. They are on the front line of seeing and dealing with the effects of climate change.

Under our plan to price pollution, provinces and territories can establish a system and use the revenues in the ways that work for them. In British Columbia, primary producers have exemptions from a direct price on pollution for farm fuel and vehicles that transport the food we buy and that farmers sell on international markets. The same is true with respect to the federal backstop. Our government is working hard to address the issues of climate change in thoughtful and substantive ways.

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## TAXATION

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Trump tariffs will hurt Canadian workers, and so will Liberal tax increases. Those tax increases will apply to companies that employ people here, but if those companies move south of the border, we will lose those jobs and they will not have to pay the taxes over there.

With this trade war now waging, will the government announce a full and complete moratorium on Liberal tax increases on workers affected by American protectionism?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, maybe we should start with the idea that small businesses in Canada actually have the lowest tax rate among G7 countries, including the United States. Then there is the fact that corporations in this country have roughly comparable tax rates to those in the United States, rates that are competitive with G7 countries. What we know is that as international norms change, we need to listen and understand these changes, so we are listening to Canadian corporations to make sure that we consider those U.S. tax changes and that our tax system remains competitive.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister is imposing higher payroll taxes on employers and workers. He is imposing a carbon tax on Canadian factories, a tax that companies will not have to pay in competitor jurisdictions south of the border. Of course, we know he has raised taxes on 80% of middle-class Canadians, and that is coming right at a time when we are facing new attacks on our workers from south of the border.

My question once again is this: Will he cancel all planned Liberal tax increases on Canadian workers affected by this trade war?

● (1435)

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when a fictional question is asked with fictional information, we need to actually react with the facts. The facts are that nine out of 10 families are better off because of the middle-class tax breaks that we introduced together with the Canada child benefit. These are important facts. On average, that is $2,300 more in after-tax income for Canadian families. This is an important change. It is actually what brought us to a situation where we had significant growth in 2017, unlike the growth experienced through the Harper Conservative years. Canadians are doing better, with more jobs and better growth. It is working.

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## AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals continually claim that they fully support our supply managed sectors, but Canadians are having a hard time believing it. First, the Liberals signed CETA, which created a breach. Then they signed the CPTPP, which threatens to blow the sector wide open, and on Sunday the Prime Minister said he is flexible to making concessions in these sectors as a part of NAFTA renegotiations. Which is it, because they cannot have it both ways? When will the Liberals stop compromising our supply managed system and actually support Canadian farmers?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear on this. We have continued to support and are committed to maintaining the supply management system in this country. The Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and many cabinet ministers have indicated this. The negotiators at the NAFTA table have indicated this. It is important to note that it is the Liberal government that put supply management in place, and it is the Liberal government that will support supply management.

[*Translation*]

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister stated in an interview that he is flexible on the subject of dairy products, one of our supply managed sectors, in the NAFTA negotiations. The Canadian dairy product market would therefore be on the table in order to reach a deal.

The government cannot say it supports preserving supply management in its entirety here in the House and then enter into agreements that have negative effects on our communities, especially our dairy producers.

Can the government explain to our farmers what exactly this flexibility is all about?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, our government is firmly committed to defending supply management. We are the ones who created it, we believe in it, and we will protect it. In addition, to support our rural communities, we have invested $250 million for dairy producers and $100 million for dairy processors, funding that has already begun to be distributed throughout the regions.

We believe in supply management and we will continue to stand up for it.

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[*English*]

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Kinder Morgan did not need any taxpayer money for the Trans Mountain expansion, just stability and certainty, but the Liberals funded anti-energy activists to stop it and did nothing for a year and a half while opponents attacked relentlessly. Now they have paid $4.5 billion tax dollars to buy the old pipeline. Kinder Morgan is taking its planned $7.4 billion out of Canada. The Liberals are making Canadians pay for the mess the Liberals made.

How can the Prime Minister justify using tax dollars to give executives millions in bonuses for his own failures?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only failure on this file was the failure of the Harper Conservatives to get any way for our resources to get to international markets. What we have moved forward with is dealing with political uncertainty that the private sector cannot deal with. We have purchased these assets so we can actually create the jobs, create the advantage for our economy, so that we can move forward in a better situation. We will eventually move it back to the private sector after we de-risk the project, a way the previous government was not willing to do.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in actual reality-land, Kinder Morgan is the latest in a long list of energy companies divesting from Canada because of the Liberals. They attack Canada's regulatory track record and add red tape and costs to Canadian oil and gas. They have killed more than $100 billion in private sector energy investments, and hundreds of thousands of Canadians have lost their jobs.

Now the Liberals are putting taxpayers on the hook for their utter and predictable failure. Why is the Prime Minister risking Canada's energy sector and giving money to millionaires, while Canadian energy workers and their families struggle to make ends meet?

● (1440)

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thought the members opposite were in favour of the pipeline. For months and months, the problem was that we were not doing enough. It is only rhetoric, only words, and now that we decide to de-risk the project, making sure that these jobs will stay in Canada, all of a sudden, we have done too much. We have not done enough; we have done too much.

We want the pipeline built, and by the way, one to export markets is better than zero.

**An hon. member:** You guys just bought a huge pile of risk.

**The Speaker:** Order. I almost always enjoy hearing from the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot, but I prefer it when he has the floor.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

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[*Translation*]

## THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to reassure the minister and all Canadians that the Conservatives are in favour of the Trans Mountain project, but we are against nationalization. Why? Nationalization means taking $4.5 billion in taxpayers' money and sending it to Texas. Not one penny of that money will remain in Canada. What is worse, nationalization often inflates prices. By way of evidence, I have here Kinder Morgan's financial statements. On page 134 of the financial statements of Kinder Morgan Canada, the total value of property is listed as $2.5 billion. That means the old pipeline is worth only $2.5 billion.

Why then did we pay $4.5 billion for it?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that it is very important for our economy to have the pipeline and the expansion. That is why we decided to do something that, down the road, will be good for both our economy and jobs across Canada. That is a very important decision for our country. The pipeline will be there. That will be very important for the economy and for the people of Alberta and British Columbia.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians will all realize that the minister did not answer the question. One thing is certain. Nationalization inflates prices. Did we pay too much? That is the problem. Kinder Morgan's financial statements indicate that the property owned by Kinder Morgan Canada is worth $2.5 billion, and you paid $4.5 billion.

**The Speaker:** Order. I must once again remind the member to direct his comments to the Chair.

The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we decided that it was vital to do something for our economy. We feel it is very important to have an international commercial pipeline. It is essential. We know that this pipeline is going to add about 15,000 jobs.

Furthermore, it will add roughly $15 billion to our economy each year, which is incredibly important. That is why we support the Trans Mountain pipeline.

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[*English*]

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today is World Environment Day, and with the G7 meeting in Quebec just days away, Canadians agree that ocean plastics are one of the most important environmental issues. The minister has said that Canada will play a leadership role with G7 countries, yet the Liberals still have failed to take any concrete action on this critical environmental concern here at home.

Will the Prime Minister finally start being a leader for the environment and support my motion to combat plastic pollution in our waterways, or is he just going to keep talking about it?

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, plastic pollution is an important and growing problem in Canada and around the world, and our government is taking action. We appreciate very much the constructive discussions that are happening around the country, including with municipal leaders, around how we can actually reduce plastic waste and keep it from polluting our environment.

This week, as the hon. member likely knows, Canada will be proposing a plastics charter at the G7 leaders meeting to align international efforts to reduce plastic pollution. We are working with the provinces and territories to develop an approach.

A national consultation is under way, and we encourage Canadians, including the hon. member, to come forward and voice their thoughts and their recommendations on how we should proceed.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised to be a leader on pollution and environmental protection. Clearly, they are not doing enough. People across Quebec and Canada demand that the government take action. My petition supporting the motion of my colleague from Courtenay—Alberni, which calls on the government to combat plastic pollution in our oceans, has been signed by 105,000 Canadians.

Will the parliamentary secretary support my colleague's motion so that we can finally take meaningful action against the scourge of plastic pollution?

● (1445)

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, plastic pollution is a growing problem in Canada and around the world. Our government is taking concrete action to address this problem. We appreciate the constructive discussions that are happening at every level around the country on how we can reduce plastic waste and keep it from polluting the environment.

This week, we will be proposing a plastics charter at the G7 leaders' meeting to align international efforts to reduce plastic pollution. We are also working with the provinces and territories.

* * *

[*English*]

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Internet is not a luxury but a necessity in today's world. We need net neutrality to ensure the free flow of information. This is vital to our freedom of expression, our digital economy, and our democracy.

In my Motion No. 168, I call on the government to have net neutrality as a guiding principle in the telecommunications and broadcasting acts review and to enshrine it in legislation.

Can the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development please provide an update on his progress to date?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member for Oakville mentioned, today we officially launched a review of the broadcasting and the telecommunications acts. This is very timely and very important because of the changing technology. We need to make sure that we have modern legislation in place to keep pace with the changes that are occurring, specifically around net neutrality, as the member mentioned. This is going to be a guiding principle in the review.

I want to congratulate the member for his leadership and hard work. Make no mistake, our government firmly believes in an open Internet.

* * *

[*Translation*]

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in January 2017, the Prime Minister invited the entire world to come live in Canada. Our customs officers are expecting up to 400 illegal migrants to come to Canada every day this summer, and that is just in Quebec.

We also know that many of these immigrants never come back for their second interview with immigration officials and the government does not know where they are living.

In the midst of all this chaos, can the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship tell us how many people have illegally crossed our border since January 2017?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, those numbers are available if my colleague wants them. We are not hiding them. As members know, we are working with the provinces and the American government. What is more, my colleague, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, was recently in contact with the U.S Secretary of Homeland Security. We are continuing to work on this file, and the numbers related to border crossers are made public. The member can consult them.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** It is understandable that the Minister of Transport would not know these numbers. It is the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship who should know them, but perhaps he does not. Once again, border services officers are strongly encouraged to speed up the security check process for illegal migrants and complete it in two hours instead of eight. Not only does the Prime Minister lack the courage to enforce our immigration laws, but he is playing with fire by reducing the amount of time required for the security process for those who do not respect our laws and enter our country illegally.

I have another question for the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. How long does it take to process illegal migrants and to deport those who are ineligible for asylum?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the border operation is a three-part process. First of all, for those who cross the border outside of ports of entry, they are arrested by the RCMP. When the RCMP has done its security check, they are turned over to the CBSA for further processing. If they pass that security check, they proceed to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada officials for consideration of their eligibility. It is a very detailed process, and security is not compromised.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the management of asylum seekers is currently inefficient. It is time to implement concrete measures to resolve a situation that has become systemic. From January to April of this year, there were 9,615 illegal entries in Quebec alone.

Can the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship tell us how many immigrants crossed the border illegally and were deported after their cases were reviewed?

● (1450)

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I explained in my previous answer, this is a multi-stage process involving several agencies in my portfolio plus the department of immigration and refugees Canada. It is a process that has worked remarkably well under very stressful conditions over the last 18 months. I think all members of the House of Commons would want to congratulate the officials at the border who have made sure that every Canadian law is enforced and every Canadian international obligation is respected.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is June 5. This crisis has been ongoing for two years and we are not getting any answers here in the House. Today, we asked three simple questions and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship himself was unable to answer. I understand that the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness are doing their best to answer, but it is not their file.

Could the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship rise in the House and answer our very simple questions in order to inform Canadians about this situation?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is determined to maintain orderly migration.

[*English*]

We have invested $173 million on irregular migration to ensure that our border security operations are fully staffed as well as the faster processing of immigration claims. What the member opposite fails to understand is that this is a joint effort. The IRCC is responsible for processing immigration claims, and the CBSA and Public Safety are responsible for removals.

* * *

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Amnesty International has just released a report, finding, after field investigations of 42 air strike sites in Raqqa, Syria, that U.S.-led coalition air and artillery strikes killed and injured thousands of civilians and that many of these were disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks that could amount to war crimes.

These are serious violations of international humanitarian law, and they call for accountability, so what is the government doing about it?

**Mr. Matt DeCourcey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is, first of all, a top contributor in Syria, having committed $2 billion to the region. We have provided close to $3 million in humanitarian assistance to partners in Syria, making Canada the fourth-largest country donor to the 2017 Syria humanitarian response plan. We are among the biggest donors to organizations that investigate international crimes and the use of chemical weapons in Syria. In addition to that, foreign ministers, at their G7 meeting not too long ago, committed to upholding humanitarian law and working with partners around the world when they work with those countries and other third-party actors. We will continue to work hard for stabilization in Syria.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Israeli supreme court gave the green light to demolish Khan al-Ahmar, a Palestinian Bedouin village.

[*English*]

Many Canadians have written to me to underline the fact that the Government of Canada has been silent on this matter and on the Government of Israel's announcement that it will build more illegal settlements in the occupied territory. Our European allies have spoken out against the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar and the new illegal settlements. Where is Canada's voice?

**Mr. Matt DeCourcey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, Canada is a steadfast ally of Israel and friend to the Palestinian people. As always, we are determined to support a process that will lead to a just, comprehensive, and durable peace in the Middle East. Our government is committed to the UN and we respect resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. For many years, under successive governments, Canada has stated that settlements constitute a serious obstacle to that comprehensive, just, and lasting peace. We have a long-standing commitment toward that, and we will continue to work to build the conditions that will lead to that lasting and durable peace.

* * *

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have been calling for a quick implementation of the trans-Pacific partnership. Now more than ever we need the opportunity for duty-free exports of aluminum and steel to Australia, Japan, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Canada should be taking a leadership role in ratifying this agreement. Will the Liberals move quickly forward with this new trade opportunity at a time when it is desperately needed?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I guess we would all agree there has never been a better time to diversify. That is why I was so proud to sign the CPTPP on behalf of Canada, an agreement that colleagues will know opened a market of 500 million consumers, 40% of the world economy.

Yes, we will proceed expeditiously to ratify the agreement, and yes, we will introduce legislation before the House rises this summer to make sure that our workers, our SMEs across this country, have access to one of the most promising markets in the world.

● (1455)

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister's own officials have stated that the text of the current CPTPP is virtually identical to the 2015 version that the Conservatives negotiated. The legislation should be ready to go. If the minister could get this bill tabled, is he willing to work with the Conservatives to ratify this deal before the House rises for summer?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will always work with the Conservatives when they want to work to create jobs for Canadians. That is what we have been asking for: to work to make sure that workers and SMEs in this country would have opportunities.

Let me remind the Conservatives that we have 22 suspensions that this government negotiated to get a better deal for Canadians with respect to culture, with respect to the auto sector, and with respect to IP. Canadians deserve that. We will always fight for them at every table.

* * *

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in December the minister received a memorandum from his department assessing the nine surf clam proposals. This morning his deputy minister confirmed that the winning bid had the lowest level of first nations participation. Of course, we know the application did have the highest level of Liberal participation.

The minister has stood repeatedly in this House and said that his decision was all about reconciliation. Can the minister explain how choosing an application with the lowest level of first nations participation has anything to do with reconciliation?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times in this House and as our deputy minister repeated at committee this morning, one of the most important things about this process was to bring indigenous communities into an offshore fishery to bring a new entrant into the Arctic surf clam fishery, something the previous Conservative government had a process to achieve, but it forgot to include indigenous people.

Our process was designed to consult industry and find the proposal that brought the best economic benefits in terms of job creation to indigenous communities in five provinces. That is why this proposal was selected for next steps.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pat Finnigan (Miramichi—Grand Lake, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today the United Nations marks the first International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

This practice is a major contributor to declining fish stocks and marine habitat destruction. Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing takes many forms within nationally controlled waters and on the high seas and accounts for about 30% of fishing activity worldwide.

Can the Minister of Fisheries tell us what our government is doing about this?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Miramichi—Grand Lake for his question.

Canada is a proud contributor to major multinational initiatives to protect fish stocks in the high seas and combat illegal and criminal fishing activities. Our government has taken a very strong stance against illegal fishing.

Operation DRIFTNET is an excellent example of international co-operation on this front. Thanks to these committed international partnerships, including the G7, we will be able to make even more progress this week in Quebec City with our G7 partners.

* * *

## MARIJUANA

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on the marijuana file, the Liberals are putting the cart before the horse. They want to legalize cannabis before their improvised drug-impaired driving bill passes.

The members of Mothers Against Drunk Driving are very worried and understandably so. Quebec police say they are not ready, that there are no evaluation officers, and to top it off, Ottawa does not care what Quebec wants.

How can the Prime Minister and his Liberals jeopardize the safety of all Canadians by ramming through pot legalization?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, both bills, Bill C-45 and Bill C-46, are extremely important. Bill C-46 includes the toughest measures in the world to deal with impaired driving.

We have worked very carefully with all members of Parliament, with the Senate, with provinces, and with law enforcement agencies to get this strengthened law in place. I look forward to the Conservative Party actually supporting Bill C-46, because some of the elements in that bill were originally proposed by the hon. member.

* * *

## PENSIONS

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in September thousands of workers employed in Canada's nuclear industry stand to lose the right to have their pensions protected under the Public Service Superannuation Act.

There is no justification for these workers to be denied a secure and long-standing right. These workers have had their pensions ripped away from them.

Will the government stand up for these workers and reverse this backwards decision before it is too late?

● (1500)

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Harper Conservatives' decision to sell off Atomic Energy of Canada Limited's nuclear laboratories has had lasting effects on employees.

We recognize the situation that CNL employees now find themselves in, thanks to the Conservatives, and we are doing everything possible to offer pension protection for employees who have been impacted by the divestiture.

* * *

## INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Doug Eyolfson (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government was proud to contribute more than $35 million towards the new Diversity Gardens at Assiniboine Park in my riding. Construction is under way, and a couple of weeks ago I had the opportunity to visit the site and see the progress for myself.

Once complete, the gardens will help connect Winnipeg to its roots, increase tourism, and create good local jobs. This is just one example of more than 145 projects in the province that have received federal funding since our government was elected.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities provide an update on our government's continued investment in Manitoba communities?

**Mr. Marc Miller (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to inform the House, particularly as I am surrounded by hard-working Manitoba MPs, that yesterday the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities signed an agreement with the Government of Manitoba that will see the federal government invest more than $1.1 billion in infrastructure over the next 10 years.

This funding will mean better public transit, more recreation and community centres, and better roads and bridges across the country. These investments will help create jobs and economic growth, build inclusive communities, and support a low-carbon green economy—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

* * *

[*Translation*]

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, an event is being held in Charlevoix, not far from the greater Quebec City area. We are proud that the world will be watching la belle province. However, in the past, there has been vandalism and destruction at these large gatherings, and local businesses and populations always pay the price. I know that there is a compensation program, but considering the many reversals by the Liberal government, can the Prime Minister promise citizens and businesses that he will show them respect and provide them with suitable financial assistance for any damages by the end of the summer?

**Mr. Matt DeCourcey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are certainly proud to have the opportunity to welcome world leaders to the beautiful region of Charlevoix for the G7 meeting. As I had the opportunity to explain to my colleague across the way yesterday, the compensation policies for local businesses affected are the same as they were under the Conservatives during the G7 in 2010. We know that the residents of Charlevoix are also proud to welcome this fine meeting and we are all proud as Canadians to be hosting it.

* * *

## THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, GPQ):** Mr. Speaker, aluminium is not just about producers. There are almost 1,400 businesses, mostly SMEs, in the processing sector throughout Quebec that may not be able to absorb a 10% American tariff in the medium term. The government said that it would be there for workers. If that is the case, it needs to act now and not wait until workers have lost their jobs.

What does the government intend to do? What is its plan for aluminium processors?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, these U.S. tariffs are unacceptable. That is why we will keep defending our steel and aluminium workers.

I met with the producers association yesterday, and all the options are on the table.

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, GPQ):** Mr. Speaker, last Sunday on NBC, the Prime Minister said that he was ready to show some flexibility on supply management.

With last week's news that he had hired an adviser who is in favour of abolishing supply management, dairy producers are extremely worried. I have two questions for the minister.

What does showing flexibility on supply management mean, exactly?

Can the government confirm that an adviser who is in favour of abolishing supply management was hired?

● (1505)

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is fully committed to defending supply management. It was introduced by a Liberal government, and we will continue to defend it.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture and our entire caucus believe in supply management. We will keep working for our rural communities.

* * *

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebeckers are outraged that the government is taking $1 billion from them in order to disingenuously finance Trans Mountain, a pipeline project that British Columbians and first nations are opposed to.

The ploy certainly paid off: some Liberals are already contemplating using the same trick to force Quebeckers and First Nations to accept the energy east pipeline against their will with their own money.

From one nation to another, can the government guarantee that the energy east project is dead for good?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that having a pipeline to bring our resources to international markets is important. That is our approach.

We believe that the Trans Mountain expansion project is crucial to our economy and will create jobs across the country. Our priority is making sure that the project gets built. It will be good for our economy and for Canadians.

* * *

## PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of Ms. Sonia L'Heureux, parliamentary librarian since 2012, who will be retiring at the end of June. Ms. L'Heureux has been working at the library since 2008 and started her career in the public service in 1987.

On behalf of all hon. members, I want to thank Ms. L'Heureux for her years of service and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis is rising on a point of order.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, during statements by members, I informed the House that an organization that supports terrorist groups is receiving funding from the federal government through the Canada summer jobs program in a Liberal riding. I have proof from a government website that that organization is indeed receiving federal funding. I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to table this official document.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, during question period, I referred to Kinder Morgan's financial statements. For the benefit of all Canadians, I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to table this report.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to table this document?

**Some hon. members:** No.

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# GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

## BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The House resumed from June 4 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:09 p.m., pursuant to order made on Monday, June 4 the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

● (1515)

(The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:)

*(Division No. 724)*

### YEAS

Members

| | |
|---|---|
| Aubin | Barsalou-Duval |
| Beaulieu | Benson |
| Blaikie | Blaney (North Island—Powell River) |
| Boulerice | Boutin-Sweet |
| Brosseau | Cannings |
| Choquette | Cullen |
| Donnelly | Dubé |
| Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona) | Duvall |
| Fortin | Garrison |
| Gill | Hardcastle |
| Hughes | Johns |
| Julibois | Laverdière |
| MacGregor | Malcolmson |
| Mathyssen | May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) |
| Moore | Mulcair |
| Nantel | Pauzé |
| Plamondon | Quach |
| Rankin | Samson cy |
| Ste-Marie | Stetski |
| Thériault | Trudel—40 |

### NAYS

Members

| | |
|---|---|
| Aboultaif | Albrecht |
| Aldag | Alghabra |
| Alleslev | Allison |
| Amos | Anderson |
| Arseneault | Arya |
| Ayoub | Badawey |
| Bains | Baylis |
| Beech | Bennett |
| Benzen | Bergen |
| Bernier | Berthold |
| Bezan | Bibeau |
| Bittle | Blair |
| Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis) | Bossio |
| Brassard | Bratina |
| Breton | Caesar-Chavannes |
| Calkins | Carr |
| Carrie | Casey (Cumberland—Colchester) |
| Casey (Charlottetown) | Chagger |
| Champagne | Chen |
| Chong | Clarke |
| Clement | Cooper |
| Cormier | Cuzner |
| Dabrusin | Damoff |
| DeCourcey | Deltell |
| Dhaliwal | Dhillon |
| Di Iorio | Diotte |
| Doherty | Dreeshen |
| Drouin | Dubourg |
| Duclos | Duguid |
| Dzerowicz | Eglinski |
| Ehsassi | El-Khoury |
| Ellis | Erskine-Smith |
| Eyking | Eyolfson |
| Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) | Falk (Provencher) |
| Fast | Fillmore |
| Finley | Finnigan |
| Fisher | Fonseca |
| Fortier | Fragiskatos |
| Fraser (West Nova) | Fraser (Central Nova) |
| Fry | Fuhr |

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|---|---|
| Gallant | Garneau |
| Genereux | Genuis |
| Gerretsen | Gladu |
| Godin | Goldsmith-Jones |
| Goodale | Gould |
| Gourde | Graham |
| Harder | Hardie |
| Hebert | Hehr |
| Hogg | Holland |
| Housefather | Hussen |
| Hutchings | Iacono |
| Jeneroux | Jody |
| Jordan | Jowhari |
| Kelly | Kent |
| Khalid | Khera |
| Kitchen | Kmiec |
| Kusie | Lake |
| Lambropoulos | Lametti |
| Lamoureux | Lapointe |
| Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) | Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation) |
| LeBlanc | Lebouthillier |
| Lefebvre | Leitch |
| Leslie | Levitt |
| Liepert | Lightbound |
| Lloyd | Lockhart |
| Long | Longfield |
| Ludwig | Lukiwski |
| MacAulay (Cardigan) | MacKenzie |
| MacKinnon (Gatineau) | Maloney |
| Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia) | |
| May (Cambridge) | |
| McCauley (Edmonton West) | McCrimmon |
| McDonald | McGuinty |
| McKay | McKenna |
| McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam) | McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo) |
| McLeod (Northwest Territories) | Mendès |
| Mendicino | Mihychuk |
| Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound) | Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs) |
| Monsef | Morneau |
| Morrissey | Motz |
| Murray | Nassif |
| Nault | Ng |
| Nicholson | Nuttall |
| Obhrai | Oliver |
| O'Regan | Ouellette |
| Paradis | Paul-Hus |
| Peschisolido | Peterson |
| Petitpas Taylor | Philpott |
| Picard | Poilievre |
| Poissant | Qualtrough |
| Ratt | Ratansi |
| Rayes | Reid |
| Richards | Rioux |
| Robillard | Rodriguez |
| Rogers | Romanado |
| Rota | Rudd |
| Ruimy | Rusnak |
| Saboia | Saini |
| Samson | Sangha |
| Sarai | Saroya |
| Scarpaleggia | Scheer |
| Schmale | Schulte |
| Serré | Shanahan |
| Sheehan | Shields |
| Shipley | Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon) |
| Sidhu (Brampton South) | Sikand |
| Simms | Sopuck |
| Sorbara | Sorenson |
| Spengemann | Stanton |
| Strahl | Stubbs |
| Sweet | Tan |
| Tassi | Tilson |
| Toone | Trost |
| Van Kesteren | Van Loan |
| Vandal | Vandenbeld |
| Vaughan | Vecchio |
| Viersen | Virani |
| Wagantall | Warawa |
| Warkentin | Waugh |
| Webber | Whalen |
| Wilkinson | Wilson-Raybould |
| Wrzesnewskyj | Yip |
| Young | Yurdiga |
| Zimmer | 245 |

PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

## BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 1

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (for the Minister of Finance)** moved that Bill C-74, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure and an honour for me to speak to Bill C-74, the budget implementation act, which is important for us and will implement measures that we believe will have a positive impact on Canadians.

This bill continues our government's efforts to reduce inequality and stimulate growth, in particular through the Canada workers benefit, which was revised in budget 2018. This benefit will give more money to those who need it most, that is, low-income workers. We will ultimately increase the benefit by 175%. We are investing $1.75 billion in the Canada workers benefit.

This measure is consistent with the Canada child benefit, which was introduced in budget 2016. As many MPs know, nine out of 10 Canadian families have benefited and received an additional tax-free $2,300. This deserves to be known. We are indexing this benefit two years earlier than planned to keep pace with higher family expenses and needs, and to help as many families as possible. We know the impact of such a measure and I can tell you about it.

All I have to do is visit the food banks in my riding, talk to volunteers at the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, or stand outside of grocery stores, as I often do on weekends to meet my constituents. They often tell me about how this measure has had a positive impact on their lives.

Here is how this benefit came to be. We looked at how the former government administrated family assistance. We implemented a more progressive system that provides assistance based on families' incomes. We stopped sending Canada child benefit cheques to families with over $150,000 in annual income, so that we can give more to those who need it most.

The Canada workers benefit follows the same logic. We believe that Canada's prosperity must be inclusive and help as many people as possible.

This is one thing I think is important in the budget implementation bill, but it is not the only thing. There is also the price on carbon pollution, a commitment we made during the election campaign. Climate change is having a serious impact on all Canadians and on future generations. Climate change also has an impact on our economy.

Take, for example, the claims submitted to insurance companies for damage caused by natural disasters. A few years ago, such claims totalled a few million dollars. Now, that number has increased to over $1 billion per year, and we expect it to continue to rise. For us, climate change is very real, and we have to deal with it.

By putting a price on carbon pollution, as proposed in the budget implementation bill, we are giving Canada a real opportunity to meet its climate change targets and be a responsible global citizen. The carbon tax will also allow us to mitigate and reverse the effects of climate change as much as possible. Those are two very important aspects of the budget implementation bill.

We also ultimately lowered the small business tax rate to 9%. We know how crucial Canada's SMEs are. They help drive our economy and create a large number of jobs in Canada. It goes without saying that we need to support our job creators and SMEs, which day after day, week after week, contribute to Canada's prosperity. We are taking that important step by lowering taxes for SMEs.

I would like to come back to something that I mentioned earlier, and that is the importance of having measures to reduce inequality. We also need to review certain measures that benefit the wealthiest members of society in order to have better targeted measures, such as the Canada workers benefit, and help those who need it most.

● (1525)

This could mean up to $170 a year for an unattached low-income worker. That is more money every paycheque. For a couple, the amount is even higher, of course.

Providing access to this benefit and increasing it is one thing, but we also want to make it automatic. In budget 2018, we announced that we will be implementing automatic enrolment so that every eligible worker receives the benefit without needing to file a claim. This issue is important to us, and I believe it is a positive aspect of Bill C-74, the budget implementation bill we are studying today.

Our government's goal is really to ensure that our growth benefits as many Canadians as possible and that our prosperity is inclusive. We have observed that the countries that have experienced significant economic growth in the decades since the Second World War are often those where inequality is lower and gaps have not been allowed to widen. In particular, I am thinking of Scandinavian countries, which have fascinating models. We have seen that reducing inequality boosts economic performance.

This is where initiatives like the middle-class tax cut for the $45,000 to $90,000 income bracket come in. This is where the Canada child benefit comes in, by giving more money to those who need it the most. We know that this money stays in the Canadian economy and is reinvested very locally, and we know that this has an impact on growth. I can confirm that under the leadership of the Minister of Finance, we fight for every decimal point of growth. That is why I strongly support initiatives to index the Canada child benefit sooner than expected, to make the Canada workers benefit automatic, and to enhance it.

This is where I see broader initiatives putting more money in people's pockets. While these initiatives are perhaps less direct, they are still very useful to people and are helping reduce inequalities. One example that comes to mind is the national housing strategy, where we are investing $40 billion over 10 years, I believe. This really confirms the federal government's commitments regarding community and social housing. Since the 1990s, the federal government has been backing away from its responsibilities with regard to community housing, and this is true of both Conservative and Liberal governments. One only needs to talk to organizations working on the ground to get a sense of how thrilled they are that the federal government is finally re-engaging and investing in community housing and social housing though our ambitious plan. The goal of our plan is to reduce chronic homelessness by 50%, renovate 300,000 housing units and build another 100,000 for those in need. That is one example.

Another area is public transit. We want high-quality, reliable, and efficient public transit systems at the lowest possible cost, systems that are so efficient that some some families can do without a car, or at least reduce their reliance on cars. These savings add up at the end of the day, but good public transit also improves quality of life and is good for the environment. These are all very positive initiatives.

Housing is an issue that is close to my heart. When I was young, I lived in a subsidized housing unit. I know how much of a burden it took off my mother's shoulders. I will never forget the day we got the call from the municipal housing bureau telling us that our application had been accepted. We were on a waiting list, and I know that it was a major change for my mother because she did not have to be afraid to get evicted at the end of the month anymore.

I am heartened to see the housing initiatives taken by our government. I am sure that they will have a similar effect on hundreds of thousands of Canadian families. In a way, it makes me glad that I am paying taxes, because I know that they are put to good use to increase social mobility, strengthen the social safety net and make sure people have access to basic necessities. Housing is a right. The most vulnerable in our society must have that right too, and the federal government needs to be active on that front.

Our government's focus is reflected in the measures we announced in budget 2018, but also since budget 2016. We are striving for a society that is more fair, more compassionate and more efficient, but we also want to create wealth. Indeed, to redistribute wealth, we have to create it first.

● (1530)

We also need to innovate and create a business-friendly climate, which will help fill federal coffers and create jobs. I would remind the House that 600,000 jobs have been created over the past two years. We recorded the strongest GDP growth in the G7 by far during that same period. That is what we need for inclusive prosperity. If we want to invest in useful and generous social programs, we need that prosperity. That is a crucial factor in the creation of a just society. It is important to have both, and we think the two go hand in hand.

When I examined budget 2018, what stood out for me and, I suspect, for many of my constituents, was the historic investments we made in science, especially basic science. Funding bodies across the country were pleased and applauded our initiative. For a decade, their budgets were frozen or slashed. Scientists were even muzzled. Canada fell behind. Anyone who stands still while the world moves forward falls behind.

Canada fell behind in terms of investment in basic research, which is crucial to future innovation, that is, in 5, 10, or 15 years. This is about more than just drugs in the future; it also has to do with innovation and businesses that could emerge as a result of ideas developed in university laboratories.

The Quebec City region is home to many, many businesses that emerged from basic research conducted at Laval University. It is always done by the brilliant researchers I am lucky to represent in my riding who eventually manage to commercialize this research and turn it into businesses that benefit our economy and the other businesses in our region. This helps them innovate and offer technological benefits in health, pharmaceuticals, and technology. This has an impact on people's day-to-day lives and also creates jobs.

There is a reason why the Quebec City region is doing so well. If we consider the research being done and how that is translating into jobs, businesses, and innovation, it is no surprise that the unemployment rate in Quebec City is 3.8%. That is practically full employment and, in practical terms, it is.

This creates another challenge that our region is currently facing, namely, recruiting and attracting a labour force. I hear about this everywhere I go in the riding when I meet with entrepreneurs.

The budget 2018 investments in basic research are historic because they are higher than any previous federal investments in research. We must provide for long-term prosperity. We do not want to stifle innovation in Canada; we want to promote and encourage it, and this is why we are making these investments.

We want to make sure that Canada stays at the forefront of technological advances and science. It goes without saying that investing in science is a long-term investment in our economy and our collective prosperity.

Similarly, putting a price on carbon pollution is a long-term investment in a healthier environment. We will be creating a liveable country and planet, where we have drinking water and as little pollution as possible, and therefore without all the health problems this pollution would cause, like respiratory problems.

The price on carbon pollution clearly shows that we want to develop the economy, which is very important, but at the same time we want to protect the environment, which is just as important. This leaves us with the third option, which is a fair, balanced, and responsible approach. You sometimes hear people say that it must be one or the other. We chose to adopt a more balanced approach.

I want to add that, if you look at the jurisdictions that have put a price on carbon pollution, this measure encourages innovation and reduces the greenhouse gas emissions that the most innovative companies will produce. This is also the objective.

● (1535)

Let us not forget that certain jurisdictions have already put a price on carbon pollution. British Columbia, for example, did so a number of years ago and its economic record is one of the most impressive in Canada. It is the same thing with Quebec and Ontario, two provinces with remarkable economic performances who have put a price on carbon. We think that both can definitely go hand in hand. It leads to a more innovative, responsible and green economy. That is how the transition has to occur.

We know that the transition will not happen overnight, but we know that it can happen gradually. It will need incentives to succeed. For example, putting a price on carbon pollution is an incentive for innovation. Investments in public transit are incentives for people to change the way they commute because they have better options. I am also thinking of tax breaks and support for green energy. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in green and renewable energy. A broad range of measures that ensure both our economic prosperity and the protection of our environment and allow for a gradual and thoughtful transition have been implemented. That is where people expect the Liberal government to be responsible.

I know that my colleague from Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs likes the idea that environmental protection and economic growth can and must go hand in hand. That is our approach. In Bill C-74, pricing carbon pollution fosters innovation and better choices, makes our economy more innovative and responsible, and protects the environment. I think that that idea is what is driving my colleague from Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs and most members on this side of the House.

We believe that economic development and prosperity are important, but that protecting our environment is equally important. We believe that both go hand in hand and that the resulting prosperity should be inclusive.

[*English*]

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the last election campaign, the parliamentary secretary's party promised a balanced budget by the next fiscal year. I wonder if he could tell us today whether the Liberals will keep the promise they made during the election campaign and, if not, in what year they will balance the budget.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember that we made a very clear promise during the campaign that we would not go down the same road as the Conservatives, in other words austerity measures and cuts at all costs to achieve a balanced budget. We said that it was time to invest and that is still the case.

The Canadian economy that we inherited from the previous government had a low growth rate and a low job creation rate. During the 2015 campaign, I remember very well the debate in the public arena was on the state of Canada's economy and whether the country was in recession or on the brink of one. I am not talking about 2008, I am talking about 2015.

Faced with that situation, when interest rates were low and we knew that there were desperate needs in infrastructure from coast to coast, we said that the thing to do was, yes, to run deficits, but also invest in our infrastructure, our communities, and science in order to stimulate and grow our economy. That decision garnered global praise.

Remember that our deficit-to-GDP ratio as well as our debt-to-GDP ratio, therefore the size of our economy, has been on a downward track and that is what we must ensure for the long term.

**Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we might hope for some good faith from our colleague from Louis-Hébert.

Is there any reason why the government would include something like pharmacare in budget 2018 but then leave it out of this bill?

● (1540)

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that important question. We know that medication is too expensive in Canada and that many Canadians cannot afford it.

I would remind my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert that budget 2018 announced the creation of an advisory council led by Dr. Hoskins, who devoted his entire political career to advocating for better access to medication. This council will study the issue and determine the best option for Canada. It is already hard at work, and we will have more on that down the line. For now, our goal is to make sure we get this right.

I know that affordable access to medication is as important to my colleague as it is to me and to most Canadians.

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, GPQ):** Mr. Speaker, fighting against the spruce budworm, a pest causing major problems for our forestry industry, is a good thing. The problem is that the funding announced in the last budget and in the budget implementation bill, if I am not mistaken, is exclusively for the Maritimes, even though the area affected by this pest in Quebec is bigger than the entire province of New Brunswick.

Why is all the help going to the Maritimes? Could this be a gift for the Irvings?

Where is Quebec in all this and in the budget?

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I really enjoy working with him.

The spruce budworm is indeed a very serious problem. We know that insects do not respect human boundaries. However, we are always looking at ways to help the regions that may be affected by this problem both in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. All levels of government, including the provinces, need to work together to address this problem.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary touched on a really good point about two-thirds of the way through his speech, when he talked about where Canada was in 2015, technically entering into a recession, and what transpired in order to get us to where we are today.

As a matter of fact, the decision the government made, in terms of putting money into infrastructure and investing in researchers and our educational institutions, had a serious impact on the way people gained confidence in what the Canadian economy was about and how it could continue to build and move forward.

Could the parliamentary secretary put forward his comments on that?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, our leader, the Prime Minister, clearly indicated that this would be our approach.

When people trust in the future and their chances of success, they are prepared to invest. That is indeed the case today since interest rates are low and needs are great. That is how the Liberals' approach in 2015 differed from those of the NDP and the Conservative Party, who were both obsessed with a zero deficit.

According to Christine Lagarde from the IMF, austerity does not work, as history has shown. When the economy is sluggish, governments have a role to play and can play it by making investments that facilitate the transport of people and goods and investments that are good for the environment.

Take for example, the renewal of waste water infrastructure. It may not be the most pleasant thing to talk about, but we are sometimes losing 40% of our treated drinking water because of outdated pipes and systems, some of which are 100 years old. We need to make investments in that area.

That is why the federal government gave a helping hand to mayors of small, medium-sized, and large municipalities in Quebec and Canada, where investments were long overdue.

● (1545)

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, spoke about our obsession with a zero deficit. It is an obsession shared by many Canadians.

I could instead talk about the Liberals' betrayal concerning small deficits. They were elected on a promise to run small deficits of $10 billion, $10 billion, and $6 billion, and then balancing the budget in 2019. Today, we know very well that we will not have a balanced budget before 2045. They made false promises.

I would like to ask the parliamentary secretary another question. In the last budget, there was absolutely nothing for agriculture. However, the previous government promised $4.3 billion in compensation to dairy, egg, and poultry producers because of the trans-Pacific partnership and the agreement with the EU on cheese imports. There is absolutely nothing about this in the last budget.

Why?

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Speaker, let us go back to the deficit, because I have to go on the record about that.

My colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable will know that the previous government's obsession was such that it sold its GM shares at a loss of $3.5 billion, while Ontario did not incur such a loss when it sold its shares. The Conservatives were so obsessed with balancing the budget, specifically in 2015, for very cynical election purposes, that it sold its GM shares at a loss of $3.5 billion to taxpayers. That would be like telling my spouse that we no longer had a mortgage, but that I had sold the car.

With regard to my colleague's question about agriculture, I know that investments have been made and that the Minister of Agriculture wants to ensure that farmers across the country have what they need to be innovative and productive.

One thing is certain on this side of the House, and it is not so clear on the other side. I talk to a lot of farmers. There are not very many in my riding, but some come to see me because they want to talk to a government representative. They tell me that supply management is non-negotiable for them, that it is important, and that it might even be responsible—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay.

[*English*]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this is a budget implementation bill. Budgets are not only about spending; they are about how we get the money to spend. One of the things that really affect that here in Canada is offshore tax havens. We are losing $10 billion to $15 billion every year because of money that has gone offshore to avoid being taxed. One mining company in Canada avoided $690 million in taxes because it had a mailbox in Luxembourg, and I guess a part-time employee to check that mailbox. I am wondering if the parliamentary secretary could tell us what Canada is doing to deal with those offshore tax havens. What we see is that more and more are being created every year.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his important and complex question.

I would like to remind members of one thing. The previous government was not worried about tax evasion and tax avoidance, but we invested substantial amounts in our first two budgets to give the Canada Revenue Agency the resources it needed to conduct the necessary audits.

Tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance through tax havens is not the same as petty theft at a convenience store. It takes considerable resources. That is why we allocated $1 billion in our first two budgets in 2016 and 2017 to give the CRA the resources it needed.

To answer my colleague's question about tax havens, we need to take a multilateral, concerted approach. The OECD is currently discussing such an approach because one country acting alone will have little or no impact compared to many countries working together.

That is why I think that the OECD's base erosion and profit shifting project, or BEPS, is a good thing. This initiative seeks to combat treaty shopping and tax treaty abuse to ensure a fair tax regime and to ensure that governments seek to obtain the taxes they are owed from abroad. However, this issue is much more complex than it seems.

[*English*]

**Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was interesting listening to the Liberal member talk today about obsession. He talked about our government being obsessed with fiscal responsibility. We are guilty as charged. I am very proud of the fact we were obsessed with fiscal responsibility during our time.

The hon. member referred to Christine Lagarde, who during the time of the global slowdown in the world economy from 2008 to 2010 was very positive and complimentary of the Canadian Harper government's approach at the time in doing what needed on behalf of Canadians to make sure that Canada weathered the storm better than almost any other country in the world.

The hon. member might remember that during that time we set a five- to six-year plan in place to stimulate the economy, but then to get the budget back to balance by 2015. I had the honour of serving on a cabinet committee that evaluated plans by ministers and departments to contribute to getting the budget back to balance, and I am very proud of the fact that in 2015, we balanced the budget. That is the situation the current government inherited.

It is interesting to contrast that with the Liberal approach to the budget. The hon. member alluded to it, but he never actually answered the question on the promise made by the Liberal Party during the last election campaign to balance the budget by 2019, a promise that seems to have been completely abandoned at this point. He never mentioned the fact that the 40% of Canadians who voted for the Liberal Party to govern voted for a government that promised budgetary balance, with modest $10 billion deficits leading up to a balanced budget by 2019. Of course, 60% of Canadians voted for parties that ran on a promise to balance the budget, but the 40% who voted for the Liberals were, of course, duped by their completely broken promise, a promise they obviously never had any intention of keeping.

I represent the largest constituency by population in Canada. Edmonton—Wetaskiwin is probably zeroing in on about 180,000 people right now. It is the constituency where oil was discovered at its heart in 1947 at Leduc No. 1, something we are very proud of in my area. We have the Nisku Industrial Business Park, which is one North America's largest business parks and is central to the economy in the region, in Canada, and around the world. It is a very significant source of pride for people in our region.

To reach out to my constituents, I regularly host round table meetings and will probably do about 50 of them this year, each with 15 or 16 constituents around a table talking about the issues of the day. We have hosted several hundred of these over the years. Recently we have noticed a trend in the topics of discussion. The top two topics of discussion and the top two questions asked at these meetings are now: one, how do we get rid of this Liberal government at the federal level; and, two, how do we get rid of the NDP government in Alberta? We talk about the democratic process and, unfortunately, at this point in time we still have 17 months until the next election when Canadians will have their say on these governments.

The other top issues are broken promises by the Liberal government. We hear a lot about debt and deficits in Canada and concerns about the future. We hear a lot about pipelines. Constituents want to talk about pipeline policy in Canada. We hear about carbon taxes and their impact on the Canadian economy. I am going to talk about some of those things and relay some of the concerns my constituents have been communicating to me.

On broken promises, I hear about these more and more from people across the political spectrum. It is not just Conservatives coming to the round table meetings, but also people who voted voted Liberal and NDP. They come to these meetings and they have been talking a lot about the Liberal platform in 2015, promises that were made and completely broken.

● (1550)

Predictably, the Liberals have set up a web page. It is a mandate letter tracker to evaluate themselves, and on the tracker the Liberals get straight A's on everything, with almost no broken promises mentioned. In fact, they do not refer to broken promises; they refer to promises that are not being pursued, and I think they only have three of them. Of course, there is an independent tracker of Liberal promises. It is named after the Prime Minister and has counted 40 broken promises to date, which is a bit more accurate. It is interesting that Andrew Coyne had this to say about the mandate letter tracker:

> Of course, it's especially galling to see such opacity being deployed in what is supposedly an example of the government's commitment to transparency. But transparency, gloriously, may nevertheless be the result. In one clueless swoop, the Liberals have managed to call attention not only to all the promises they have broken, but to their comical inability to admit what is plain for all to see.

That is a good summation of the Liberals' own website to track their own progress on promises.

I thought I would talk a bit about some of the promises that were made during the last election. I look here at page 29 of the Liberal election platform. If the Liberals who are in the room want to follow along, they can pull up their own platform and would read the following. On electoral reform, the Liberal platform stated, "We are committed to ensuring that 2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first- past-the-post voting system." I looked that up on the mandate letter tracker and apparently that is not being pursued. It is one of the three promises that are not broken, but just not being pursued anymore. We all remember the process that led to that decision. The Liberals tried to put forward a process to have a committee of parliamentarians from all parties study the electoral process in Canada. They went across the country and heard from various stakeholders, a lot of Canadians, about what they wanted to see in electoral reform. The committee worked together. Members of opposition parties came to agreement. That does not always happen in this place. We saw the Green Party, the NDP, and Conservatives come to agreement on a way forward and, of course, the Liberals then scuttled that agreement because it was not their chosen system. They had one particular system they wanted to go with that would have enhanced their numbers in the House of Commons. Right now about 60% of the MPs have been elected with 40% of the vote, and the system the Liberals wanted would have given them 70% of the seats. In the absence of the committee's reporting what the Liberals wanted to hear, they just abandoned the committee's report and broke their promise, or decided not to pursue it.

I turn to the very next page in the Liberal platform, for those following along. Indeed, I see there are a few people on their computers on the Liberal side. I hope they are following along as I am saying this. They will read on page 30, regarding free votes, that "For members of the Liberal caucus, all votes will be free votes with the exception of: those that implement the Liberal electoral platform; traditional confidence matters, like the budget; and those that address our shared values and protections guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms." Those are the only three exceptions in the Liberal platform, and there is another promise.

Those who watch the proceedings in the House of Commons on CPAC could go back to the 10 years we were in government. The Conservative Party had more free votes than any party in the House of Commons at that point. The Liberals at that time were second. The NDP whipped its vote more than any other party. However, what we have now seen is the Liberals whipping their vote like no other government we have seen in the past. I will speak from personal experience. I moved a motion almost exactly a year ago on a Canadian autism partnership, which seemed to have strong support from Liberal members when I talked to them ahead of time. We had 12 of them show up on the Hill for World Autism Awareness Day, but when it came time to vote on the measure, they were whipped and every single one of them voted against having a Canadian autism partnership, which would have cost all of $20 million over five years. It was a partnership that experts had been working on for a couple of years. Clearly, that did not fit any of the Liberal exceptions and yet Liberal members were whipped to oppose it. Here is the clincher. In the mandate letter tracker, the Liberals have given themselves an A-plus on that, meaning it has been completely and fully met. The Liberals apparently have free votes on every single vote that does not fit those exceptions. Hopefully, the Liberals in the House right now who are looking at their computers are putting an X beside that one, and maybe they can answer that in their comments as we move forward.

● (1555)

We are just dealing with two pages so far. We were on page 29, and now we have page 30. On page 30, here is what the Liberals had to say on the subject of omnibus bills:

> Stephen Harper has also used omnibus bills to prevent Parliament from properly reviewing and debating his proposals. We will change the House of Commons Standing Orders to bring an end to this undemocratic practice.

They were going to bring an end to it.

We could have a debate as to whether the government should use omnibus bills. It has been an important topic of conversation for a long time how governments conduct themselves in the House and what tools they use or do not use. However, this is an example of a clear promise the Liberals made, and what are we debating today? We are debating an omnibus bill. The bill is 540-plus pages long, dealing with matters across government. On top of that, the government has used time allocation twice on the bill, at report stage and now at third reading, limiting debate at third reading to just five hours for a 540-plus page budget implementation bill.

Those who have been in the House for a long time would remember the Liberals decrying any use of time allocation on any bill when we were in government. The Liberals used it five times last week alone. In just three days they used it five times, including the time we have right now to debate this.

On the omnibus bills promise, the Liberals gave themselves another A-plus in their mandate letter tracker, as being completed and fully met. I wish I could have had a class with a professor like the Liberals when they evaluate themselves over there. I would have had a 100% average.

The following is the most critical promise. I could spend the entire five hours, if I were given the time, just talking about broken Liberal promises from their platform alone. However, I will finish with page 12 of the platform, where it talked about the budget. This is interesting, because the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge asked a question about this. It feels like it was probably our thousandth question on this subject. He asked when the budget would be balanced. Of course, he got a meandering response that had nothing to do with the question. Every time a Canadian hears that question asked, they should refer back to the promise from page 12 of the Liberal platform. I will give my hon. colleagues across the way time to look this one up, in case they do not remember, because it seems like no one over there remembers this promise. Here is a direct quote from the Liberal platform:

> We will run modest short-term deficits of less than $10 billion in each of the next two fiscal years

—this was back in 2015, and I think we are three times that now—

> to fund historic investments in infrastructure and our middle class. After the next two fiscal years, the deficit will decline and our investment plan will return Canada to a balanced budget in 2019.

This is kind of funny. The mandate letter tracker evaluates this one as "underway with challenges". I do not even know what that means.

I could probably give another 20-minute speech analyzing those three words, but I am going to come back to the debt and deficit promise, the promised modest $10 billion deficits that would be balanced by 2019. The reality is that the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the finance minister's own office have said that the budget will not be balanced until 2045. Some say it will be 2052, or more than a generation away.

The really interesting contradiction here is that the Liberals, whenever they get up and answer questions in question period, or Q and A time here, point to how fantastic things are in the Canadian economy.

● (1600)

The Liberals say the Canadian economy is doing great, and yet, as great as they claim the Canadian economy is doing, they cannot find a way to balance the budget. They are running a $22-billion deficit right now and claim the economy is doing fantastically, leading the world, but they cannot balance the budget, which is in a $22-billion deficit.

I will give a bit of a history lesson. In 1968, Canadians elected a Trudeau government, and Canada had almost no debt in 1968, or very little debt. That Trudeau government ran deficits in 14 out of 15 years in power. In 14 out of 15 years, it ran deficits. In 1984, when the Liberals were finally defeated, Canada had high interest rates, our economy was in a shambles, and for the next nine years the Mulroney government ran deficits. The Liberals like to point to those deficits as being very large, but what people do not realize is that if we look at the numbers behind those deficits, we see that the Conservative government, during those years, brought in about as much money as it spent, and, on top of that, the interest payments on Trudeau's debt were among the biggest deficits in Canadian history at that time.

The interest payments on Trudeau's debt accumulated over nine years, to the point where, in the mid-1990s, another Liberal government came to power. Canadians across the country who were around at that time remember the devastating cuts of the mid-1990s. Thirty-five billion dollars was cut from health care spending, social services spending, and education spending through the Canada health transfer and the Canada social transfer. If we were to talk to virtually any stakeholder who works in the kind of world that the Liberals describe as important, those stakeholders would say that those cuts in the mid-1990s, such as to international development, were absolutely devastating to the things that Canadians hold dear and the things that Liberals purport to hold dear.

Where are we going now? The projection for a generation from now says that we will be running continued deficits, that we will be in the neighbourhood of $1 trillion in debt by the time these deficits accumulate, and our demographics will have changed. Some have said that for every senior citizen right now, there are about four people in the workforce. We will have two and a half people working for every senior citizen by 2030, the numbers show, and those two and a half people are going to have to pay down the Liberal debt. There is no way.

We saw it before, in the mid-1990s, and we are going to see it again. If we keep going in the direction we are going, we are going to be looking at massive cuts to health care, education, social services, international development, cuts to whatever is important. Governments of the day a generation from now are going to have to take a look at cutting those things to pay down this Liberal debt. Remember that in the mid-1990s, it was a Liberal government that had to make those cuts to pay off the Trudeau debt, and we are looking at the same situation repeating itself.

I will quickly touch on pipelines, because that is a big issue in my constituency. On top of the debt that we are running up, we are completely hamstringing ourselves when it comes to the revenue side. The situation the Liberals inherited was that northern gateway had been approved, and we had energy east, which they regulated out of consideration. After TransCanada had spent over $1 billion on red tape, they finally decided to make, as the Liberals called it, an economic decision—of course, they made an economic decision not to move forward on something that had already cost them over $1 billion in red tape—and they had to nationalize Trans Mountain to make it work.

I have a lot more to say, but I will move an amendment. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following:

Bill C-74, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be not now read a third time, but be referred back to the Standing Committee on Finance for the purpose of reconsidering clause 186 with the view to requiring the government to reveal how much the carbon tax will cost.

● (1610)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech today. I did listen to it, despite the fact that I may have been one of those people who was also working at my computer here researching some of the information and facts that he was talking about.

The one thing in particular that I picked up on in his comments was with respect to the whipping of votes. I can tell the member, at least from my perspective, that my votes do not need to be whipped to vote in favour of a small business tax reduction. My vote does not need to be whipped to vote on introducing the Canada workers benefit, nor does my vote need to be whipped to vote for indexing the Canada child benefit.

What I noticed yesterday when we voted for four hours on amendments to the budget was that the member, along with every other member in the Conservative Party, voted on an amendment to delete the reduction in the small business tax rate for corporations. I am curious. Can the member explain why, on at least that one amendment, he did not vote in opposition to the amendment?

**Hon. Mike Lake:** Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting opportunity, because on small business taxes, the Liberals made a promise to follow the Conservative plan, the track we had set forward, to reduce small business taxes in this country. They made a promise on that, and then they subsequently broke it. It was another broken promise. I am hoping that more Liberal MPs will get up and ask me questions directly related to promises that were broken by the LIberal Party.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech.

It will come as no surprise that I am going to talk about an aspect of the budget implementation bill that bothers me.

I know that my colleague is concerned about the situation of persons with limitations, challenges, or those who are ill.

For years, doctors have been prescribing medical cannabis. For some people, it is the only way to deal with chronic pain or very intense pain. Medical cannabis was not taxed by the federal government. Now, for no reason, under Bill C-74, this product will be taxed, compromising some people's ability to receive care and not live in pain.

I would like the hon. member's thoughts on that.

[*English*]

**Hon. Mike Lake:** Mr. Speaker, it kind of fits a pattern with the Liberal Party wherever there is something that is not taxed. Of course, the Liberals had officials studying everything we can pay tax on to find out where they can realize more revenue, because they know, as I watch what is happening over there, that they are running these budget deficits. Some may want to attribute to them an intent to run budget deficits, and I sometimes do that myself, but I lean more towards the fact that the Liberals have no idea what to do. They are running a deficit, but they made a promise to balance the budget and it is quite clear that they have no idea what to do about it, so from time to time they float things like raising taxes on benefits that employees receive, like a discount on a hamburger or something like that, or taxes on medical benefits and those kinds of things.

Of course, from time to time, Canadians speak loudly against those things and the Liberals have to back down a little bit. However, I think that is what we are in for over the next 17 months: the Liberals will be continually floating new ideas to raise taxes because they have no idea how they are going to get that deficit down.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was interesting listening to my friend across the way as he tried to explain to viewers and those who might be listening to the debate. He gave the impression that the Conservatives actually know how to manage a budget, particularly on the issue of deficits. However, it is interesting that what the member did not talk about was that the prime minister who had the greatest contribution to the deficit was Stephen Harper.

Stephen Harper, when he first became prime minister, inherited a multi-billion-dollar surplus. Before the recession kicked in, the turned that multi-billion-dollar surplus into a multi-billion-dollar deficit, and every year after that it continued to be a deficit until the election year, when the Conservatives sold GM shares, among other things, to try to say that they were going to have a balanced budget, but that never happened either.

My question for my colleague across the way is this: Given that Stephen Harper and the Conservatives have proven very clearly that they do know how to have deficits and that Mr. Harper added over $150 billion in debt, why should we take advice from the Conservative Party when it comes to deficits?

● (1615)

**Hon. Mike Lake:** Mr. Speaker, it is really interesting to hear this. I do not think the hon. member was elected in 2008, but I am sure his colleagues could tell him that during those days, when the world was experiencing a global economic slowdown of a kind we had not seen in decades, Liberal members could not demand enough spending by our government. We could not spend enough to satisfy Liberals on that side.

Liberal members will also remember that at that time the government, along with finance minister Jim Flaherty and Stephen Harper, laid out a seven-year plan to get our budget back to balance, and we followed that plan perfectly.

We can contrast that to the situation we are in now—not a global economic meltdown, but rather what the Liberals celebrate as some of the best economic times we have ever had, yet they have to run $22 billion in deficit with no plan to get back to balance until 2045.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Edmonton—Wetaskiwin for raising the issue of the mandate tracker. I was listening quite carefully to that. We heard some recent testimony at government operations committee about that. I recall from that meeting reading and hearing that under the balanced budget election promise, the mandate tracker characterizes this current performance as "underway—with challenges" in kind of a bizarre euphemism.

Could the member comment on that piece? The mandate of that finance minister was to implement the Liberals' election promises, a question they have ignored every time it has been asked. I wonder if the member would comment on the mandate tracker and the challenges on a balanced budget.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** There are so many places to go with that, Mr. Speaker.

The Liberal promise said that after the next two fiscal years, the deficit will decline and their investment plan will return Canada to a balanced budget in 2019. Now it says "underway with challenges". I do not even know where to start.

I played a lot of sports in high school, mainly track and field. I am thinking now of the high jump. If I turned around for a second and then turned and started my run to the high jump bar and saw that it was set at 70 feet, that is where we are at right now with the budget. That is how close we are right now to balancing the budget. The Liberals have about as much chance of balancing a budget as I would have of doing a 70-foot high jump. It is not going to happen.

I would love to hear a Liberal member take the opportunity to speak. They get a lot of time to speak here, but of course the time for debate has been limited to five hours. Maybe one of them will use his or her 20-minute opportunity to explain how we are going to get back to a balanced budget by 2019 and overcome those challenges.

**Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think of myself as naive, so when a budget speech talks about things like pay equity and there is actually nothing in the budget implementation act for pay equity, I do find it a bit disingenuous There are a lot of pronouncements and announcements, but very little follow-through.

I wonder if my hon. colleague could comment on the fact that there is no money in the budget to implement pay equity, yet the Liberal government touts itself as a feminist government.

● (1620)

**Hon. Mike Lake:** Mr. Speaker, a lot of times in the House we focus on the differences between parties. Certainly NDP members and Conservative members have many differences in opinion in terms of policy, as do those who support our parties. However, when I talk to my constituents, no matter whether the individual is an NDP supporter or a Conservative supporter, I find we can unite around our shared frustration about a government that talks a good game on a lot of different things, says what needs to be said to get votes from whichever segment of Canadian society it wants votes from on a given day, but really has no intention in many cases of implementing the things it talks about. I enumerated several of those things in my budget speech, but unfortunately I did not have enough time to enumerate all of the areas of concern.

This is something of major concern to Canadians, and we are hearing it more and more across the country.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to seek the unanimous consent of the House to be able to share my time with my hon. colleague from Elmwood—Transcona.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie have unanimous consent to share his time with another member?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank all my colleagues from both sides of the House for agreeing to this humble request, which will allow us to hear my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona's fine speech.

It is a pleasure for me to stand in the House and speak again to the budget implementation bill. As I previously said while asking a question to a Conservative member, I am greatly disappointed and puzzled that the Liberal government decided to tax medical marijuana. Doctor-prescribed cannabis was not taxed before. This new measure will hurt people who need cannabis, a substance often prescribed as a kind of last resort, when other medications did not work.

People in my riding came to see me. They are very concerned because it is sometimes the only thing which works to alleviate chronic pain and help people with cancer, who have undergone surgery or been through an accident. Our veterans also use it sometimes to assist in the treatment of PTSD. I do not quite understand the aim of the government in imposing higher taxes on those people. The government could get considerable sums of money from several other sources, and I might have the opportunity to talk about it. Billions of dollars in revenues are lost each year in tax loopholes for corporate CEOs and in tax heavens.

I do not want those people to have to choose between getting a treatment and not getting it or between getting prescription medication such as medical cannabis and buying groceries to see what food they can put on the table for dinner. I just wanted to say that.

Again, this budget is noteworthy for its glaring omissions. We can always talk about a budget and what it contains, but we can also talk about what it does not contain. Being in government means making choices. Sometimes, that means leaving certain things out. Those choices are significant because they have an impact on people's lives. One of the promises the Liberals made but have yet to keep was to end subsidies to oil and gas companies in Canada. Our analysis shows that these subsidies amount to $1.3 billion to $1.6 billion a year. However, once again, it is not entirely clear, and the government has released no action plan for reaching that goal.

I am a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, and this morning, we were fortunate enough to have the Minister of Environment with us. I asked her repeatedly if she could tell me exactly how much taxpayer money goes to oil and gas companies each year. She was never able to give me an answer. The Liberals promised to end these subsidies, but they have no idea how much they are. That is not the worst part. I asked the minister if she agreed with the Auditor General, who reported in May that the Liberal government has not even defined what a subsidy to the oil and gas industry is. I can understand the minister's confusion, as the Liberals do not even understand the nature of the beast they are hunting.

What was the point of the federal government promising to phase out these subsidies at the last few G7 summits and the last G20 summit, if the Liberals do not even know what they are talking about and have no clear-cut definition?

It is obvious that they will not be able to keep this promise. Once again, the Liberal government is all talk and has no specific measures to back its promises and successfully make a just energy transition for workers, which requires many things. Once again, in the last budget, the Liberal government failed to introduce very concrete measures to ensure that we would adopt cleaner, renewable sources of energy, the energy of the future and the energy behind the jobs of today and tomorrow. There is a lack of investment in renewable energy and in the skills training required to ensure this just transition.

A few weeks ago, I attended a summit in Montreal organized by environmental groups, unions, as well as investment funds and business representatives from Montreal. One thing that became very evident was the need to invest in skills training for workers who today can build a pipeline or an oil terminal and could be taught to build a solar panel or a wind turbine. It is feasible and they would be good jobs. People will be ready to work.

● (1625)

However, the government needs to put the money on the table right now, so that we will have well-trained workers who can make this transition in five or 10 years. The goal is to create good jobs in an energy sector that has a smaller carbon footprint than the current one. The government does not have money to invest in renewable energy and no money to invest in training the workforce, but it has money to buy an old pipeline. What a surprise. There seems to be no limit here. No big deal. The government has no idea how much it will cost, but that does not matter.

I want to point out that the Minister of Finance announced that he would spend a surprise amount of $4.5 billion.

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** A Kinder Surprise.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Indeed, Mr. Speaker. What a great play on words from my New Democrat colleague. It was a Kinder Surprise. Unfortunately, this surprise could turn into a nightmare in the coming years. The government just said that it would spend $4.5 billion of taxpayer money to buy a 65-year-old pipeline, that is already leaking and that is not very safe. This will not create any jobs. All the government did was buy existing, aging infrastructure and equipment, but it will not create any jobs.

In addition, the American company Kinder Morgan estimated that the pipeline expansion would cost at least $7.4 billion.

A total of $11.9 billion from the public purse is being spent on energy that increases greenhouse gas emissions. This flies in the face of the Paris Agreement targets and will considerably increase the frequency of extreme weather and natural disasters, which are already costing us billions of dollars a year. We simply do not understand why Canada is investing in an energy source of the past rather than today's energy and the energy of the future.

Just how far is the Liberal government going to take this spending spree? We do not know. Infrastructure projects often go over budget in the construction phase. This has been the case for many projects in Montreal, including mega-hospitals and the Champlain Bridge. This is extremely troubling because it really feels as though the government thinks it has its own money printing press and can do whatever it wants.

Investments in renewable energy pay off a lot more in terms of job creation. For every dollar invested in renewable energy, job creation is six to eight times higher than the same investment in fossil fuels, which, unfortunately, are still front and centre around the world. Other countries are currently in transition, but Canada is really falling behind on this. The Liberal budget does not help find a solution or make the transition. Personally, I find that extremely troubling.

There is another thing I want to point out on the environmental front, even if much smaller amounts of money are involved. As environment critic for the NDP, I do not understand how the department in charge of implementing the Species at Risk Act could have seen its budget reduced by $12 million. That is $12 million less for all the programs to protect endangered species in Quebec and across Canada. We have now entered what is probably the sixth greatest extinction period for animal, plant and insect life in our planet's history. It is the sixth largest extinction period, and the government chose to cut funding to implement the Species at Risk Act. I simply cannot fathom why.

What is missing from the budget? All the investments in social housing announced with great fanfare are not in it. Investments over 11 years were announced for social housing, all of which will begin after the 2019 election and after the 2023 election. It is easy for a government to make promises and commitments when it has no idea if it will still be in power at that point. People are in dire straits right now. Thousands of people are in need of social housing because 40% to 50% of their income goes to rent. That leads to poverty. The Liberal government had the opportunity to make massive investments to address that right away.

Tackling tax havens and closing tax loopholes for the wealthiest CEOs would give the government billions of dollars that could then be used to help people who are suffering and who need social housing today. That would make all the difference in their lives. Sadly, the Liberal government has other priorities, which is unfortunate.

● (1630)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is going after tax evaders. We are literally spending hundreds of millions of dollars, close to a billion dollars in the last couple of budgets, to deal with those who are trying to avoid paying taxes. The NDP does not support that. The New Democrats talk about it, but they do not support it.

With respect to housing, we have the single largest investment in a multi-year budgeting housing strategy, which is even greater than the housing strategy commitment he NDP made in the last election. In that election, the NDP said that it would have balanced budgets. Imagine the cuts the NDP would have had to make to get to get to that balanced budget.

Many of the things this government is doing are of a very progressive nature. Why does the NDP consistently vote against measures that are taking kids and seniors out of poverty, that are putting money in the pockets of Canada's middle class? Why does the NDP resist such positive, progressive measures?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Mr. Speaker, simply because I do not see anything progressive about letting the CEOs of this country use tax loopholes that cost us $800 million per year. That is not progressive. The Liberals brag about helping the middle class with a tax cut, but the Liberal tax cut does absolutely nothing for people who earn less than $45,000 per year. It does not affect them. The Liberals seem to think that people who earn $30,000, $35,000, or $40,000 per year are not part of the middle class and therefore do not need help. The people who will benefit the most from the Liberal tax cut are those who earn $100,000 or $120,000 per year. That is not the NDP's definition of middle class.

When it comes to combatting tax evasion and tax avoidance, obviously there is no point hiring more police officers if it is legal to rob the store. The problem is that it is legal. Yes, we need auditors and inspectors. We agree that more of them are needed, but what is the point if the Canada-Barbados treaty makes it okay for people to send money there, pay 1% or 2% in taxes, and then bring the money back here where they pay no tax at all?

These are bilateral treaties. We do not need to wait for the world to wake up and change. If the Liberals meant what they said, they would renegotiate all of these tax treaties with tax havens instead of signing new ones like they did with the Cook Islands.

[*English*]

**Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my hon. colleague an opportunity. I wonder if he reflected on this, as I did. When the Prime Minister said "This pipeline will be built", what an amazing event it would have been if he had said that he would end homelessness or that he would implement a just transition.

When I heard the Prime Minister announce the investment in the pipeline, I simply added to that. What if he had said that he would end homelessness by investing $4.5 billion immediately and that by the end of August this year, the government would have a plan to end homelessness.

I offer my colleague an opportunity to perhaps imagine what that might mean for a just transition if the Prime Minister said that he would implement a just transition for workers in Canada, with an immediate investment of $4.5 billion.

● (1635)

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Mr. Speaker, sadly, part of the answer is that the Prime Minister cannot be trusted.

When he was asked in British Columbia if he would review the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain project under the old assessment process, and he said "absolutely not", that he would change it, that he would evaluate it with a new credible assessment process. Did he? No, not at all.

When he was asked in British Columbia if an aboriginal community disagreed with the construction of a new pipeline would he respect the will of that aboriginal community, his answer was "absolutely". Let us look at what is happening right now.

The Prime Minister cannot be trusted. This is why we need a just transition for our economy, our workers and families that are working in the energy sectors. However, we see no decision, no action, no movement from the government. We could do a lot with $4.5 billion. This is why we do not think this a good budget or a government we can trust.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak to the budget implementation act at third reading. As I think all members of this House know, budgets are really where the government shows its hand, and notwithstanding what it might say, what its real priorities are.

We can look at this budget implementation act and what is in it and compare it to what was in the budget document. There were some things the Liberals said they wanted to move ahead with in the budget document that were laudable. The question then becomes, when the time comes to put them into law and decide what we are going to move ahead with, whether they are here in the budget implementation act. If they are not here, then all Canadians get on those issues are the words in the budget document, which by themselves do not do anything for Canadians and do not change anything.

If the government wants to say, as I believe it did in the budget document, that it is going to get hard on CEOs who are abusing tax loopholes to avoid paying their fair share of taxes, that is all well and good. We say that too. However, if it does not put that in the implementation legislation to change the law that allows those CEOs to do that legally, they are just words.

The Liberals said in the budget document that they were concerned about workers, such as the Sears workers. Of course, we know that workers in many other companies, across many other industries, have faced a similar problem: the company declares bankruptcy and the money in its pension plan is doled out to big banks and investors, or in some cases, to the very same CEOs who were underfunding the pension plan for years by taking holidays or in other ways. It is all well and good for the government to say that it is concerned about that in the budget document, but when it comes down to it, even though what is happening is absolutely wrong, it is legal.

The point of raising the issue and what it means to stand up for those workers is for the government to say that it will change the law so that it is no longer legal. If that is done, those companies can be pursued in court and made to face justice. This budget implementation act does not do that, even though the government talked about the issue in the budget.

The Liberals brag about bringing in a new carbon pricing regime on the one hand. On the other hand, they have told us in question period many times over not to worry, because 85% of Canadians already live under a carbon pricing regime. Which is it? Are they providing leadership on carbon pricing, or are Canadians largely already there? I think there is a real tension in that message.

What is a glaring deficiency in the carbon pricing regime they have proposed in this budget implementation act is that for the fallback carbon price for provinces that do not already have their own systems, the government has not proposed any kind of rebate system. In provinces like B.C. and Alberta, the NDP brought in carbon price rebate programs to ensure that low-income Canadians were not disproportionately affected by a new carbon price. That is something the government could have put into this legislation. It is something we would have been happy to push harder for, although we have mentioned it in the House before.

One of the things we tried to do was take those carbon pricing provisions and break them out into a separate piece of legislation so that we could have a more detailed study of those provisions. That would have provided the opportunity to talk about a meaningful rebate program for low-income Canadians, including seniors who are living on fixed incomes, who will be hit by this in provinces where they do not already have that regime or in provinces that will bring in a carbon pricing regime but will not bring in a rebate program. We think that would have been appropriate and that the federal government could have modelled that in this legislation. However, because it insisted on bringing in that pricing regime in an omnibus budget bill instead of breaking it out, we did not have the time it takes to prepare those kinds of proposals. That is one of the problems with these kinds of bills.

I have said this in the House many times, and I truly believe it. Part of the problem with omnibus bills and using time allocation in the way the current government has, which is setting records with respect to the amount it uses it, and the short period of time it allows after imposing time allocation, is that civil society does not get the opportunity to weigh in on these bills.

● (1640)

It is difficult enough for members of Parliament who have not had a lot of time to appreciate what is in a bill to do their due diligence. However, we are supported. We are supported by the Library of Parliament. We have staff in our offices, and still we struggle. In some cases, due to the time constraints imposed by the government, we are not able to do the kind of study and perform the kind of due diligence I think people expect of members in this place. However, for people in civil society who do not have that kind of time and do not have those resources who are trying to educate themselves about what is happening here in Ottawa after work or between looking after their kids, and all the many other things Canadians do during a day, time allocation in this place makes it even harder for them to engage in discourse about what is happening.

Pensions are a big issue for folks where I am from in Elmwood—Transcona. Therefore, it was a big disappointment to see that there was no legislative follow-through on the discussion of pension theft in the budget document. It was a rather weak discussion, I would say. Nevertheless, if one wanted proof that those words were weak and did not mean anything, the fact that there is nothing here, particularly in light of the fact that my colleague for Hamilton Mountain has already drafted the legislation that would be required to get this done and that the government has taken the good ideas of some other NDP members and incorporated them into government legislation already, shows that the government decided not to move forward with it. I think that is a disappointment to a lot of hard-working people across Canada, particularly in Elmwood—Transcona, some of whom worked at Sears and others who saw what was happening to employees. It was a long-standing institution at Kildonan Place mall. People felt that the workers who worked there for all those years ought to get a fair shake. It is disappointing not to see that.

People in Elmwood—Transcona are disappointed to see that the only thing that came of all the talk on pharmacare by the government was the establishment of a simple committee, and there is actually no money even for that committee to operate. Maybe they will find that money elsewhere. Why they would not put it in the budget, though, in terms of being open and transparent about what the costs for that committee are actually going to be, I do not know.

When we talk about fairness for workers and a budget implementation act being an important opportunity for the government to signal its commitment to a good future for workers, where they can go out and get a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, we think of women across this country who have been waiting for a very long time to get pay equity. Again, pay equity was mentioned in the budget document. However, it does not appear anywhere here.

When we talk about pay equity, the debate for decades has centred on the need to bring in legislation. If this was going to happen spontaneously, out of the good will of corporate Canada, presumably it would have happened a long time ago. We know we need legislation. The budget document itself said we needed legislation. The budget document in 2016 said we needed legislation. The Liberals, in the campaign in 2015, said we needed legislation. Here is another opportunity that has gone by to provide that legislation, and people are rightly beginning to wonder if another election is going to go by before we see that legislation presented.

Pay equity is an important component of any real vision for the future in Canada where we manifest real fairness for workers. We cannot ignore over half the workforce and pay them less for doing work of equal value and pretend that we have fairness for workers in the country. That is another example of where this budget implementation act simply does not live up to the kind of vision the Liberals were trying to project in their budget documents.

Therefore, I forgive Canadians who maybe listened to the news coverage or even the budget debate and thought, wow, there is a lot of great stuff in there for workers. The fact of the matter is that this does not really bring us closer to a fair future for Canadian workers. It ought to. That is why I came to Parliament. I know that is why my colleagues here in the NDP caucus came to Parliament. We will continue to hold the government to account until we replace it.

● (1645)

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the budget and its implementation act work in concert with the estimates process that actually gives legal authority for expenditures by the crown. I know that the hon. member is a very diligent and concerned member when it comes to government structures around the spending powers of the crown. I would like him to comment on his concerns about the whole budgetary process, of which this budget implementation is a part, and in particular, on whether he has any further words to contribute in the debate on vote 40.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I wondered perhaps if I could ask for unanimous consent for 20 or 30 minutes of the House's time, but I will not. I will confine my remarks to the time allotted.

There is something genuinely new about this year's budget and estimates process, which is that the government has decided to seek authority for the spending to implement these initiatives in a genuinely new way. Instead of preparing the programs conceived in the budget document and running them through Treasury Board, where the rigorous costing is done, and making sure that ministers have answers for parliamentarians when they ask about that funding, the government has instead lumped it all into one central vote. It is asking for authority for spending of over $7 billion for all the new budget initiatives in one vote. It has been a real problem for committees, which have not been able to get straight answers.

We know from the PBO, who followed a previous year's budget, that 30% of the items in that budget actually cost significantly more or significantly less than what was forecast in that budget.

Ultimately, I think it will be a problem for Canadians who find that their money has not been well spent because the due diligence was not done. That is why I have been endeavouring to stop it.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague in the NDP criticized the government's position on the legislation, insinuating that there were additional measures put in here that should not be in a budget document. At the same time, he was advocating for pay equity and pension legislation.

Would he agree that those are appropriate pieces of legislation to put in a budget document? I think the two of us would come very close to being in the same place in terms of how we feel about those particular pieces of legislation. Would he say that the budget document would be a proper place to put those pieces of legislation?

● (1650)

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I would be quite happy to see those initiatives come to Parliament in separate bills, so I have no quarrel with the idea that those would come in separate pieces of legislation. I notice that, in fact, they have not. I notice also that the government is bringing an omnibus bill for the budget implementation to this House anyway. If it is going to do it anyway, at least put the good stuff in it.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to dive a bit into the carbon debate, because in his comments, the member said that they did not know if there would be a rebate. The way the backstop has been designed by the federal government for Bill C-74 is that there will be a carbon price across the country if provinces do not set up their own plans. I actually think the architecture of this is quite good, and it puts a lie to the constant claim by the Liberals that they needed to give Rachel Notley a pipeline or they could never get a carbon price. A co-operative Alberta is certainly better than a resistant Alberta, but we have a resistant Saskatchewan, and we are plowing ahead. The carbon price will be across the country. It will backstop. It is up to every province if it is revenue neutral or not.

I want to get on the record that I regret that the new government in B.C. has moved away from revenue neutrality. For the first time since our carbon tax was put in place in B.C., it will be entering into the general revenues of the province.

I want to give the hon. member a chance to reflect on that. We need a carbon price. We need a much more vigorous, real carbon plan, which we do not have. However, there is a backstop, and it is up to each province if there is a rebate.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, the point I was trying to make in my speech was that I think there could have been a rebate factored into the backstop. What I think is deficient about the plan is that it does not do that. That would have been an excellent way for the federal government to model it for provinces that are initiating their own programs and say that this is how it can be done. For those provinces that do not bring in their own regimes, that would mean that low-income Canadians in those provinces would benefit from a rebate program. That is the real missed opportunity I see in the carbon pricing model.

The secondary point I was trying to make was that if we had been successful in separating that into a separate piece of legislation, we might have had the time to debate that point more fully instead of trying to lump it in with all the other initiatives included in the budget implementation act, although, unfortunately, not in the budget. There are a lot of things in the budget we should be moving ahead on that are not in this bill. If the government wants to introduce separate bills for those things, I actually think that would probably be the more appropriate way of going about it. However, if it is committed to the view, and it seems to be, that one act will implement the budget, then surely it could have put some of the better things from the budget in the act instead of leaving them out.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-74 on behalf of the Government of Canada, as well as our government's planned investments to strengthen the middle class and maintain the strength and sustainable growth of the Canadian economy.

Budget 2018, entitled "Equality + Growth: A Strong Middle Class", represents the next stage in our plan to invest in people and the communities where they live in order to provide the best opportunities for success to the middle class and all Canadians.

The bill we are talking about today, budget implementation act, 2018, No. 1, is the next step in the plan that our government launched over two years ago. When we took office, we jumped into action by helping develop a confident middle class that stimulates economic growth and that is currently benefiting from more opportunities for success than ever.

Giving Canadians the opportunity to reach their full potential is not only the right thing to do, but it is also the smart thing to do for our economy. The decision to invest in the middle class is the right decision. Targeted investments combined with the hard work of Canadians across the country have helped create good, well-paying jobs and will continue to strengthen the economy over the long term.

● (1655)

[*English*]

Before I go into some of the measures introduced in Bill C-74, it is always a good thing to step aside and take a holistic approach to what is going on in the Canadian economy. For example, if we look at the first quarter gross domestic product, we see some continuing good signs. As an economist, I love these terms. We had real final domestic demand rise by 2.1%, driven by a 10.9% increase in business investment.

Recently, off those numbers, the Bank of Canada governor, Stephen Poloz, commented on the signs of the economy of exports and business investment continuing to pick up. Despite the uncertainties in the global economy and the continuing NAFTA negotiations, business investments remain strong.

Those are great signs for our economy, but what does that really translate to? Quite simply, it translates to 600,000 new jobs, 600,000 people working today who were not working two and a half years ago. Those Canadians are our neighbours, our friends, our family. Also, 300,000 kids have been lifted out of poverty because of the Canada child benefit, which we introduced and which is arriving monthly, tax-free, to Canadian families, such as the families in my riding, Vaughan—Woodbridge. Those are great things that we are doing.

The A.T. Kearney foreign direct investment confidence index came out two weeks ago, making comments on what our plan for the economy is doing for Canada. Canada was ranked number two. I would like to read what the A.T. Kearney index said:

> Canada moves up three spots to its highest ranking in the history of the Index. An update to the Investment Canada Act, a newly established Invest Canada agency, and new trade agreements [CETA, CPTPP, entering into negotiations with Mercosur] could be boosting investor optimism.

What does a boost in investment translate to? Very simply, it means jobs for middle-class Canadians in my riding, and coast to coast to coast. I am very proud of the measures introduced in Bill C-74.

One of them is the Canada child benefit. We have spoken about it quite a bit, and we should continue to do so. In my riding, Vaughan—Woodbridge, over $59 million was sent via the Canada child benefit to families in a one-year period. It assisted approximately 19,400 children. The number of payments was 10,900, with an average payment of $5,400.

We can throw lots of numbers out there, but behind them are Canadian families like the ones that reside in Vaughan—Woodbridge. These funds are being sent tax-free, not to millionaires but to real Canadian families, families that are working hard to pay their bills every day, assisting them to pay for their kids' sports, lunches, new clothes, and so forth, and maybe save for an RESP for when their children go to university.

I am so proud of the fact that our government indexed the Canada child benefit. What does that mean? Let me simply tell members.

[*Translation*]

For example, the Canada child benefit is an important government initiative aimed at making a positive change for the millions of Canadian families with children. Close to 3.3 million families with children are receiving more than $23 billion in annual Canada child benefit payments.

A single mom of two children aged five and eight with a net income of $35,000 in 2016 will have received $11,125 in tax-free Canada child benefit payments in the 2017-18 benefit year. Naturally, this $11,125 is absolutely tax free. That is $3,500 more than she would have received under the previous child benefit system.

[*English*]

This means that, for a family making $35,000, once the Canada child benefit is indexed, it would add up to almost $560 more per year. For families in Canada, $500 more a year is a lot of money, to pay for their kids' lunches and school clothes, to bring their son or daughter to a soccer game in the evening or to a soccer practice, and so forth. I am proud that our government has looked at this initiative. I am proud that our government has lifted 300,000 kids out of poverty because of this. I am proud that our government has indexed this. These are real, tangible measures that are assisting families from coast to coast to coast on an everyday basis, and our party should be proud of that.

I am proud to represent a riding, Vaughan—Woodbridge, within the city of Vaughan, that is one of the most entrepreneurial areas of the country. We have approximately 13,000 small and medium-sized enterprises in the city, and I meet with these folks regularly. We are also blessed to have many large organizations. We have Canadian Pacific's busiest intermodal facility in the country, a key barometer of trade and investment. We have Home Depot's eastern Canada distribution centre. We have the FedEx distribution centre for eastern Canada. We have UPS's distribution centre for all of eastern Canada. Again, UPS made that wonderful announcement of investing $500 million in the Canadian economy, creating thousands of additional jobs. We have a furniture maker, Decor-Rest, which employs 700 Canadians, competing globally against furniture makers both here in Canada and in the United States and Mexico, and winning in competing.

I am blessed to have all these entrepreneurs. I am also blessed to have a number of bakeries and great pastry shops, which I have talked about before, especially during Italian Heritage Month. I visit them and we talk about what makes these companies successful.

One big thing we have done, which is contained in Bill C-74, is the reduction in the small-business tax rate from 11% in 2015, which will eventually fall to 9%. We should be proud of that. For small businesses making $500,000 a year in active income, the savings would be $7,500. That can offset other increased input costs they may face. They can use those savings to invest in their businesses, or whatever they choose. That is something we need to applaud.

Looking at our corporate tax system in Canada, the combined federal corporate tax rate in the province of Ontario, roughly 12.9%, is one of the lowest small-business tax rates globally. We have seen that turn up in the job numbers, with 600,000 new jobs, most of them private sector jobs. That is a good barometer for the economy. That is why we have larger companies like CN or CP hiring. However, we also have small companies, because we know that small and medium-sized enterprises and businesses are the backbone of our economy.

That measure, introduced in Bill C-74, is something we should be very proud of. Cumulatively, that measure would result in approximately $3 billion in tax savings due to lower taxes for small and medium-sized enterprises in Canada through the 2022-23 period. This is a substantial reduction in taxes. When we brought in the tax cut for middle-class Canadians, people said, "Whom does it affect?" It affected nine million taxpayers. We brought in a multi-billion dollar tax cut that benefited millions of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and here we are doing the same thing for small businesses.

● (1700)

We also undertook extensive consultations with small businesses on how we could best work with them to grow their business, because we want to increase jobs and investment and achieve better productivity and a better standard of living for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

We also want to ensure that the businesses that benefit from that low small-business tax rate are the appropriate ones. We undertook a consultation and arrived at a point where we introduced measures where 97% of businesses remain unaffected. If people have an active business, they can continue to invest in it and continue to grow. That is wonderful. These are measures contained in Bill C-74. However, we also have what I think is a very prudent measure. If they have actually accumulated $3 million, $4 million, or $5 million in what is called passive income, which is a little technical to describe, something they can save for retirement or set aside and invest in a separate business, which may not be connected to their own business, that is great. They can continue to do that, and we are not going to change the tax structure within their passive investments. However, at a certain point they will no longer benefit from the small-business tax rate of 12.9%, and we will move them up to the 24% tax rate. It is a fair measure.

Canadians expect fairness and progressivity in their tax system. Canadians expect us to do a thoughtful job. When others take a risk, they should be rewarded, but at the same time they should understand that when they have done very well and have been able to set aside some monies within passive investments, they are also going to move up to the corporate tax rate, which is very competitive globally. Even with the United States' adoption of its recent tax reform, our corporate tax rate is very competitive with the U.S. tax rate, and we need to point that out.

There are a lot of good measures contained in Bill C-74, and I am very proud of them. Another one I would like to talk about is the Canada workers benefit. This is something a lot of low-income working Canadians are going to benefit from. There are a couple of measures that I think are very good and long-lasting, and they will proceed beyond this Parliament and many others.

One is working with CRA and undertaking automatic enrolment. Automatic enrolment means that those in society who do not have the means or access that many of us here enjoy are automatically enrolled to receive these benefits. According to the estimates, just this measure alone is going to lift 70,000 people out of poverty and provide additional benefits. Someone making $15,000, a student or a retiree, can receive up to nearly $500 more with the new Canada workers benefit. It is something I am very proud of. My progressive roots cheer this on. It is something that all Canadians can be very proud of.

● (1705)

[*Translation*]

We realize that some people, especially indigenous people living in northern and remote communities, have often faced barriers when it comes to accessing essential government services and federal benefits such as the Canada child benefit. With Bill C-74, our government will take steps to ensure that anyone who is eligible for support receives it.

Through Bill C-74, the government proposes to expand outreach efforts to all indigenous communities on reserves and in northern and remote areas, and to conduct pilot outreach projects for urban indigenous communities so that indigenous peoples have better access to a full range of federal social benefits, including the Canada child benefit.

Now I would like to talk about the Canada worker's benefit. Canadians working hard to join the middle class deserve to have their hard work rewarded with greater opportunities for success. We know that these Canadians are working to build a better life for themselves and their families. Low-income Canadians are sometimes working two or three jobs so that they can give themselves and their children a better chance at success.

That is why the government is proposing a new benefit in budget 2018 and in Bill C-74: the Canada workers benefit. This benefit builds on the former working income tax benefit and would put more money into the pockets of low-income workers. It would encourage more people to join and remain in the workforce by letting them take home more money while they work.

Through Bill C-74, the government would increase the overall support provided for the 2019 and subsequent taxation years. In particular, the government proposes to increase maximum benefits under the CWB by up to $170 in 2019, and increase the income level at which the benefit is entirely phased out. As a result, low-income workers earning $15,000 could receive up to almost $500 more from the CWB in 2019 than they could receive this year under the current working income tax benefit. That is $500 to invest in the things that are important to them, and to make ends meet.

The government is also proposing changes to improve access to the Canada workers benefit to allow the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate the CWB for anyone who has not claimed it starting in 2019.

● (1710)

[*English*]

Again, having the CRA automatically register people who are eligible for these programs and others is a large step forward for our tax system.

One thing I would like to comment on is the framework we have introduced for the pricing of carbon. We have done this in a very thoughtful and prudent manner. It is a backstop, and 85% of Canadians are covered by a form of carbon pricing system. The provinces are permitted to do what they wish with the revenues.

However, I agree with the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. It was very disappointing that the NDP government in B.C. would move away from a revenue-neutral price on carbon. I am very disappointed. It speaks to fiscal foolishness. We need to allow provinces to do what they wish, but we need the provinces to be transparent. Our carbon pricing system is transparent. The funds flow back to the provinces and the provinces then decide how to allocate those funds, but they should also be transparent about it.

We have an opportunity in this world that we are moving into. Many countries have already adopted this pricing system, and many industries in the private sector, which I am a big champion of, have looked at this. We have companies all over the world, such as Daimler in Germany, FCA, Ford, or any automotive company, looking at adopting electric vehicles, at technology on clean tech, and at renewable energy. We have the system going on. We have this shift going on. We need to be a part of it.

However, this is not, as my Conservative colleagues are saying, scaring away investment. It is not. We saw it in the first quarter GDP numbers. Business investment in Canada is rising. We see that every day, whether it is Samsung announcing its AI facility in downtown Toronto, or Montreal being the gaming sector of North America when it comes to enterprise arts. We see it in Vancouver, with the clustering that is going on, and in the Kitchener—Waterloo area. We see it with many auto parts suppliers in Ontario, and then there is Toyota's announcement. Foreign direct investment in Canada is creating jobs. It created jobs yesterday, it is creating jobs today, and it will create jobs in the future, because we are making those conditions very strong.

Finally, when we talk about Canada's fiscal position, we maintain a AAA credit rating, which we have had for so long. It has been affirmed recently. Our debt-to-GDP ratio is declining. I would argue that we have the best fiscal position of any G7 country on any fiscal measure, and that is something we need to be proud of. It is something our government is proud of.

Therefore, when I hear the banter from the other side, I would love to sit down and chat with them and show them a couple of measures on the economy. These measures that show how well we are doing include the 600,000 new jobs we have created, the 40-year low in the unemployment rate, the increase in wages that Canadians are seeing from coast to coast to coast, and the infrastructure we are building in this country.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay, The Environment; the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, International Trade.

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague has a background in finance and investment banking, and in his speech he spoke about the importance of supporting the middle class. In particular, he mentioned the Canada child benefit, which has done so much to strengthen the Canadian economy and attack the problem of child poverty.

I wonder if he could compare the CCB with the previous government's approach to child benefits, which was not tax-free, whereas the CCB is. The CCB is also means-tested, unlike what existed under the previous government. I wonder if he could compare and contrast those two different approaches and what they mean for Canadians on a general level.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, it is great to work with my hon. colleague from London North Centre and be on the same side of the aisle with him.

The Canada child benefit has had a profound impact on families and our economy, to the point where it actually boosted GDP in a year. The approach we took was to send cheques to the families that need them the most. It is kind of an interesting approach, when one thinks about it. We thought we should the cheques not to millionaires, but to the families that need them the most.

Yes, it is means-tested. For those who make over $200,000, it will be diminished. For someone like myself and my family, we do not receive it any more, but we are fine. It is for Canadian families who are working hard to make combined family incomes of $70,000, $75,000, or $80,000, who have one, two, or three children at home. I have two daughters at home, and I know how much it costs. It will help families. It is going to be tax-free. At the end of the year, those with higher incomes will not get a bunch of tax back, because that does not make sense. That was bad policy under the prior government. We fixed it, and we are proud of that.

● (1715)

**Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was awoken by this unbelievable analysis of how child benefits are delivered in Canada. I wonder why the member did not include in his characterization of the child benefit that the universal child care benefit went to everybody. For people with high incomes, it was neutralized by being taxed back.

He did not mention the arts credit that the Liberals removed. He did not mention the sports tax credit that the Liberals removed. He did not mention the transit tax credit that Liberals removed, which most families enjoyed. Amazingly, he did not mention income splitting for lower-income families, so that they could enjoy that as well.

All of this profoundly diminishes this current child benefit and puts families way behind where they were, including a family I know very well in Winnipeg, a stay-at-home mom with two kids. This family pays $1,500 more in tax because of this crazy policy.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, I believe my hon. colleague is reading information from the Fraser Institute, so I will leave it at that and put that aside.

In terms of how tax credits work, some can be refundable, and some can be non-refundable. You need taxes owing or taxes payable. A lot of the tax credits that were introduced by the prior government were for families that would not benefit from them because they did not have taxes payable. It is unfortunate. The CCB goes to all families that need it, up to $200,000, and it is something we are proud of.

The member brought up income splitting. If we look at the evidence, that benefited more well-to-do families than anything else. It is something I have read about extensively and something I do not support as an economist. There are other policy measures that would have been much more effective, which could have been but were not adopted by the prior government. Conservatives were actually warned not to adopt income splitting by their prior finance minister, God rest his soul.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I did not know my colleague from Vaughan—Woodbridge was an economist, so I will ask him a question. I am not an economist but I have two daughters and I am fully aware of the cost of prescription drugs. I am a Quebecker and I live in a society which made the effort of setting up a pharmacare program. Even then, it is complex. When someone has a pharmacare plan as part of employment benefits, they have to join it, but when you do not have such a plan, you are covered by the public system, and managing income tax becomes all the more complicated as you have to file two tax returns.

However, the logic behind it has often been explained and it is clearly beneficial for Canada to have a pharmacare program for all Canadians. Why not do it, then? What a disappointment to see nothing in the budget implementation bill when such a program was mentioned in the budget plan.

[*English*]

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, in the province of Ontario, and I have to give credit where credit is due to the Ontario government and the provincial Liberals, we have OHIP+. All children are covered up to the age of 25. It is universal. It was introduced last year. I am very proud to say that. It is going to be a legacy measure.

Federally, we have indicated that Dr. Eric Hoskins, a former Liberal cabinet minister from Ontario, is leading a task force on this. Frankly, 80% of Canadians are covered with some form of pharmacare coverage, but there is a gap.

We need to sit down with all the provinces to come up with a pan-Canadian solution. We are looking at taking measures to lower drug prices all around. We recognize that, and that has been ongoing. We need to sit down with all stakeholders to have a substantive, prudent, consultative process on how we can reach the point where no Canadian family is impacted by the cost of prescription drugs.

That is something we can all come to an agreement on in this House. There are different ways of getting there, but the ultimate goal is that no Canadian family should go to bed at night worrying about the cost of prescription drugs or how they will be covered.

● (1720)

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my distinguished colleague's speech and comments earlier. He was talking about some of the measures the previous government had taken that would in fact benefit the wealthiest. One of these measures was doubling the TFSA limit.

We know that the original thinker who came up with the idea of a TFSA said at the time that this would put the state in a fiscal straitjacket. When the former finance minister, Joe Oliver, was asked what kind of situation it would put the state into, in terms of deprived revenues, he said that is a problem for Stephen Harper's granddaughter to solve.

We have taken a different approach and brought the limit back to what it formerly was. When they say they are working for working-class Canadians, I always smile and wonder who the working-class Canadians are that they have in mind, who have $11,000 at the end of the year to put in a TFSA account. Their constituents might be very different from mine.

I am just wondering if the member has any comments on the kinds of policies we saw from the previous government, as opposed to the ones we have adopted, where we try to give more to those who need it most instead of having an approach that is focused on the wealthiest.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, looking back at the 10 years when the Conservatives were in power and TFSAs were at $5,500, they allowed a lot of Canadians to save and to put away something for their retirement.

Retirement savings are important. However, the $11,000 limit was foolish, to be frank. I do not know many Canadians who could set aside $11,000 of after-tax income a year to be saved for their TFSA. We reversed it, and left it at $5,500. It will gradually increase as inflation increases.

We put in place a number of measures. If we wanted to look at the marginal propensity to consume or spend, it is where Canadians need it the most, and those who need it the most are benefiting. That is showing up in our 3% economic growth rate last year. It is showing up in the 2% above-trend growth rate this year, as commented by the Governor of the Bank of Canada.

It is something we are proud of, whether it is the Canada workers' benefit, the Canada child benefit, or how those programs have been designed. They have been designed to give to Canadians who need it the most.

If I could just add, we have done more than that when it comes to skills training. We also need to get Canadians trained for those jobs of the next century and the next decade, so we can ensure their success. That is something that is big. It was big in our fundamental research within the budget. It is big within our government. It has been in the last three budgets, including this one. Skills training and fundamental research are things we can be proud of. We know the world economy is changing very rapidly, and we need to make sure that all Canadians have the skill set to enable them to maximize opportunities for themselves and their families.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we resume debate, I would like to inform the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable that he has about five and a half minutes left to go before private members' business. The member will certainly have time to wrap up his speech when the House next resumes debate on this motion.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will listen with rapt attention when private members' bills are introduced, as today's subject is truly worthwhile. This period will surely be of interest to a lot of people, as there are sometimes excellent proposals in these bills.

This is not the first time that I have had the opportunity to speak to Bill C-74. I have had the opportunity to do so on several occasions. As the member for Mégantic—L'Érable, I have spoken of the effects of the bill in my riding. As shadow minister for agriculture and agri-food, I have risen to say how few measures there were for agriculture and agri-food in the last budget.

When Bill C-74 was introduced, I did not expect the government to once again exercise its prerogative to prevent members from speaking, as they are entitled to do in the House, on the budget and its consequences in their ridings and their various portfolios.

I greatly enjoyed the speech by one of my colleagues today. Several times, he referred to the government's adoption of a process for tracking mandate letters in order to deliver results to Canadians. In the way that the Liberals have of congratulating themselves for deciding whether they are keeping their promises, he said something that made quite the impression on me. Indeed, under the heading of a fair and open government, there is mention of ending "the improper use of omnibus bills and prorogation". On that front, the Liberals gave themselves a mark of "completed - fully met". Can we request a recount? Can we change the mark that the Liberals give themselves for the use of omnibus bills?

Bill C-74 is definitely in the line of an omnibus bill. That is why the government is again using a time allocation motion. They want to limit debate. When an omnibus bill is introduced that impacts so many areas, it is normal for members of all political stripes to have things to say and for them to want to use the time available to them. Unfortunately, the government is in panic mode as the session ends. We saw it last week: in three days, they used motions five times to silence members, to end debate or to say that only five hours remained to debate a certain bill. Since the start of the parliamentary session, the government has used that type of motion 38 times.

In this brief summary of very Liberal commitment, I am sure that they mentioned what the parliamentary secretary said in the last Parliament. I did not find the exact quote as there are so many promises that were not kept. The parliamentary secretary told anyone who would listen that these time allocation motions could not be used, that they were undemocratic and that the use of this type of motion was a lack of respect for Canadians.

Each time the Liberals propose a time allocation motion, I will read the words of my colleague across the way. I must say that I am not at a loss for things to say. Certainly, my colleague speaks a lot and leaves a record. When we leave records, they are quoted back to us in the House.

As the parliamentary secretary said at the time, it is not about how you go about it, especially when you promise to no longer do it. That is the difference. We understand that governments must sometimes use these motions to move debate along. However, the Liberals committed to not use this type of method to restrict democracy in the House.

● (1725)

Unfortunately, at their current pace, believe it or not, they will greatly exceed the record of the former Conservative government. They are panicking and they think that they will not have time to pass the limited legislative agenda that they have already tabled.

After consideration of private members' bills, it will be my pleasure to come back to speak about Bill C-74 and all that it does not contain.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable will have 14 and a half minutes to wrap up his comments on the motion when the House resumes debate on the bill.

● (1730)

[*English*]

It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

### SUPPORTING NEW PARENTS ACT

The House resumed from April 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-394, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (parenting tax credit), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** When the House last took up debate on the question, the hon. member for Calgary Midnapore had seven minutes remaining in her time. Therefore, we will go to her now.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to discuss Bill C-394, the Supporting New Parents Act, brought forward by our leader. I do know one thing to be true. I mentioned this before and it bears repeating, as I continue my final seven minutes to discuss this piece of legislation. As I mentioned, I am a mother myself. I am very proud to be a mother. When we were discussing this piece of legislation before, one theme was just how incredibly expensive it is to welcome a child into the world.

It is a wonderful thing being a mother. It is the most marvellous thing, and among the most, if not the most satisfying thing I have ever experienced. However, there is certainly a cost to becoming a new parent, without question.

I think all of the speakers previously agreed that welcoming a child into the world is very much an expensive proposition. However, I will say this: Babies are expensive but the government is more expensive. That is why we need to consider the different costs associated with babies to start. When people have a child, they prepare, and purchase the things that are necessary. There is an endless list, such a stroller, the car seat, the crib, and the high chair. I recall my colleague previously doing a calculation for things like diapers and formula. Really, the costs are absolutely astounding.

Of course, as a responsible Conservative, I also considered the other financial implications. I know that my husband and I considered additional life insurance for my family. We took the time to have a will made, because it was something very important to us now that we had a future stake in the world. As well, we were very fortunate to begin an RESP contribution for our son.

Despite the the costs, it is a great joy for new parents to spend time with their child. I am sure that many, if not all, parents would say that it is probably the greatest joy of all. I was very fortunate when I had my son. I was, at that time, the deputy consul general in Dallas, Texas. Therefore, just like many Canadian women, I had a good job and a solid career. I had my child and was able to re-enter the workforce somewhat quickly. This has been done before. It will be done again in the future. It is something that mothers do all the time.

However, I was especially fortunate because my husband at the time was able to take two years from his career to care for our son. In fact, he credits this experience with the position he has today, in that his skills as a parent were recognized by his present employer. Therefore, this bill allows parents to spend more time with their children, which is something very important.

In addition, I mentioned before that we were able to have not only a happy child, but a healthy child. This is, indeed, not something that every family has the blessing of. I mentioned someone who is very close to me who had a child with hemolytic uremic syndrome, which resulted in many hours in the hospital. This experience with this child of theirs, this sick child, was certainly a testament to their strength and their will, and something that I cannot possibly imagine. However, the point is that this bill would, in fact, ease the burden of a family from a tragedy or something like that. It would allow them to be a greater ease in regard to their finances as they deal with their sick child.

In addition to the goodwill that is required to take care of a child, I just want to take a minute to discuss how the government talks about supporting and sticking up for the middle class. Supporting this bill was actually mentioned at the status of women committee, the very committee on which I sit, yet a recommendation in support of this bill was not included in a recent study of theirs. That is shameful. To me, it just shows spite on the government's part, that it is not willing to even consider a piece of legislation, even if it would be helpful to parents and to all Canadians.

● (1735)

Let us take a look at what has been destroyed by the government since it took office in regard to children.

First is the universal child care benefit. Every Canadian parent benefited from this and looked forward to receiving it every month. I know that $160 a month for my son certainly made a difference in my family budget.

Second is the children's fitness tax credit. My little guy plays hockey and that is not an inexpensive undertaking. All Canadian parents can certainly benefit from such a tax credit. It is a shame the Liberal government disposed of it.

As I said, babies are expensive, but the Liberal government is more expensive.

My son would never think about being the owner of a $4.5 billion pipeline, something I did not account for when I created my will. I am not sure if my son has any expectation of is ahead for him with respect to the carbon tax and its cost for my family as well as for future generations.

Babies are expensive, but the Liberal government is more expensive.

What concerns me the most for my son is the generational debt. This is the reason we should support the bill. It is about easing the financial burden on families. There is a deficit this year of $18 billion, a total debt of $669 billion. I daresay my son will be 32 years old when this debt is scheduled to be paid off.

Babies are expensive; the Liberal government is more expensive.

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member said that her son played hockey, which is not inexpensive, and that she benefited from the tax credit. As a kid, I did not play hockey because it was too expensive and my mother's revenue did not qualify for a non-refundable tax credit.

That is the difference in approach between the previous government and our government. The Conservative government focused on boutique tax credits that would help some but not all and often not those who needed it the most, like my mother when she was raising me. That is the starting point where there is a difference in approach between the Conservatives and our party and our government.

[*Translation*]

It is with pleasure that I rise in this debate to speak to Bill C-394, which will amend the Income Tax Act by providing a non-refundable tax credit of 15% on income earned from the employment insurance maternity and parental benefits program. The proposed amendments would also make it possible to carry forward the credit or any unused part of the credit for a period of one year, and to claim it in the following taxation year.

We understand the good intentions behind this bill and share most if its values. However, Canadians must be able to count on a government that will help create good, well-paid jobs that support a strong economy and that offer families opportunities to prosper. It is important to note that Bill C-394 misses the mark in that regard.

The proposed tax credit is not an effective means of achieving the objective set out in the bill, which is to offer help to all parents who take leave to care for a newborn or adopted child. That is one of my many concerns regarding this proposal.

[*English*]

We believe in supporting parents who need help with the high cost of raising kids, and helping kids have the best start in life. The member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, through his PMB, wants to continue the Harper practice of boutique tax credits that benefit some but not all, while we are helping everyone by providing more to the middle class and to those who need it most. In fact, under Bill C-394, the following groups would not even qualify for the non-refundable tax credit: almost all of those who are self-employed; those who do not pay federal personal income tax; those who do not qualify for EI maternity or parental benefits. Our approach, however, puts more money every month directly into the pockets of nine out of 10 Canadian families, helping lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty.

Even the Parliamentary Budget Officer has voiced some reservations, mentioning that given the tax credit is non-refundable, not all families would have sufficient income to claim their total eligible amount in 2018-19. The PBO also estimates that this tax credit would result in forgone revenues of $607 million in 2018-19 and a future fiscal liability of $261 million that could be claimed in future years.

On this side of the House, we have taken action to strengthen the EI system to better support new parents. Mothers can now access maternity benefits up to 12 weeks prior to their expected due date. In addition, parents can now choose to receive parental benefits over a longer period at a lower benefit rate.

In budget 2018, we have also announced a new employment insurance parental sharing benefit that would give greater flexibility to parents by providing an additional five weeks of EI parental benefits when both parents agree to share parental leave. Taken together with our government's investments in early learning and child care, we have a plan that is working for Canadian families.

● (1740)

[*Translation*]

Here is another concern I would like to highlight.

It is best to amend the Income Tax Act as part of the budget process. Doing so enables the government to consider all the options, to balance priorities, and to make new fiscal commitments, but only if they are affordable. This means we can continue to offer the programs and services Canadians need while keeping taxes low for middle-class families.

That goal is especially relevant in the case of Bill C-394, which could be a $1-billion line item according to the Department of Finance. That cost will probably go up, plus the tax credit is for just one aspect of the employment insurance benefit system.

Bill C-394 has many more shortcomings that could result in much more paperwork and compliance issues. For example, unless the provinces choose to bring in parallel measures, all income earned in a given province will still be taxed on those amounts.

Once again, we see a major flaw in this bill. Although it aims to help parents who receive EI parental or maternity benefits, it offers nothing to parents who do not receive such benefits when they take leave to care for a newborn or newly adopted child. Self-employed workers, people with no insurable earnings and people whose income is too low to be taxable would receive no tax relief under the proposed credit.

The government does not believe that Canadian families would be well-served by a wide range of highly targeted tax credits that benefit certain people, but that do nothing for those who may be most in need. That is why, over the last few years, we have eliminated poorly targeted and ineffective tax expenditures. The proposed parental tax credit falls squarely into that category.

The government wants to ensure that the federal tax system and the benefits that are part of it are fair and effective, and that the system works for all Canadians, but that is not the case with the proposal before us.

The government has implemented a plan that helps the most people through, among other things, the Canada child benefit and the strengthening of the EI system to better support new parents.

Since 2016, Canadian families have received additional support through the Canada child benefit. Not only has that benefited Canadian families, but it has also lifted hundreds of thousands of Canadian children out of poverty by giving more money each month to low- or moderate-income parents to help them cover the high costs of educating children.

As well, the Canada child benefit is entirely tax-free, unlike the former child benefit system. The Canada child benefit is also simpler, more generous, better targeted and gives more help to the people who need it the most.

Approximately 3.3 million families with children receive more than $23 billion per year under the Canada child benefit. Approximately 54% of families who receive the maximum benefit amount are single-parent families and, in 90% of cases, are single mothers.

For example, a single mom of two children aged five and eight with a net income of $35,000 in 2016 will have received $11,125 in tax-free Canada child benefit payments in the 2017-18 benefit year. That is $3,500 more than she would have received under the previous child benefit system. That is important to mention. That amount makes a big difference in the lives of many families, single-parent and others, across the country, which the measure proposed today does not do.

Under the bill accompanying budget 2018, our government is strengthening the Canada child benefit by indexing the benefits each year to follow the increase in the cost of living, as of July 2018, two years earlier than planned.

The Canada child benefit helps families invest in the things that give kids a good start in life, like a safe living environment, healthy food, music lessons or sports camps. As well, to support greater gender equality at home and in the workplace, budget 2018 proposes to create a new employment insurance parental sharing benefit. Such a measure has been in place for years in Quebec and has had very conclusive results: 83% of fathers take parental leave. That benefit will result in additional take-it-or-leave-it weeks of EI parental benefits when both parents agree to share parental leave. This measure should be in place by June 2019.

At a time when Canada has a strong and growing economy, the government is making smart and necessary investments to ensure that the middle class, including all parents, continues to benefit from that growth. We want growth and prosperity to be inclusive.

The Canadian economy has been booming for two years. Canada has the strongest growth in the G7, 600,000 jobs have been created and the unemployment rate is at its lowest in 40 years. It is important for that prosperity and that growth to benefit the most people and for the social elevator to work in Canada.

● (1745)

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP):** Madame Speaker, we are dealing with a very important issue raised by the leader of the official opposition in his bill, the issue of parental benefits. However, the tool that he proposes is not at all adequate.

The main problem is not the refund of costs through a tax credit, but the issue of access to those benefits. This issue not only affects Canada, but also other countries.

Parental leave is the result of a long fight that began in the early 20th century. One of the first protections voted by the International Labour Organization in 1919 was the Maternity Protection Convention.

That standard was revised in 1952, providing for a minimum of 12 weeks, while recommending that the length be extended to 14 weeks. In 1998, 120 countries granted maternity leave. In under 20 years, such leave has been extended to fathers and same-sex partners. If we look south of the border, the United States does not offer parental leave, which forces many young families to make enormous sacrifices. They choose to return to work just a few days after the birth or adoption of their child because they do not have the means to pay for leave. That is a model that we should stay as far away from as possible. I am proud to be in a country, or in a province, actually, that offers parental leave.

If, in the United States, only rich families can afford to have one parent stay at home to take care of their baby, in Canada we also have a corresponding problem: accessibility. The main problem with parental leave benefits is that they are difficult to access. The priority if we want to fix the parental leave system should be to improve accessibility by lowering the minimum number of hours parents need to work to qualify for benefits.

This becomes clear when we compare the ratio of people in Quebec and in Canada who have access to parental leave benefits. In Quebec, 84% of new mothers benefit from parental leave. In Canada, that number is only 64%. One-third of Canadian women cannot access parental leave. That is why making the system more inclusive should be a priority.

In every province and territory, including Quebec until 2006, parents must accumulate 600 hours of paid work, regardless of what their salary is, to qualify for paid leave to take care of their child. These benefits are paid monthly and cover 55% of the salary.

Think of how that compares with Quebec, where any parent who earns $2,000 or more qualifies for paid leave. If a man or woman earns minimum wage, he or she is eligible for parental leave after 178 hours of work. In other words, Quebec requires less than one-third of the hours required in the rest of Canada. In Quebec, parental benefits make the lives of parents a little bit easier financially speaking, since they can count on monthly payments of between 55% and 75% of their income, depending on the number of weeks requested, with the maximum insurable earnings being $74,000.

As my colleagues have already said, unfortunately, this bill will help the members of our society who need it least. The tax credit will help those in the upper tax brackets and high-income earners, while low-income parents who have difficulty making ends meet will not stand to benefit hardly at all.

The provincial law helps less fortunate families and the effect is noticeable, since there is a considerable gap between Quebec and the other provinces when it comes to the use of parental leave.

Let us look at the case of mothers with a total household income of less than $30,000. A lot more of them take paid leave in Quebec than in the other provinces and territories.

Based on the 2013 data, researchers Sophie Mathieu, Lindsey McKay, and Andrea Doucet found that 85% of low-income women in Quebec had access to paid maternity leave compared to 44% of women in the rest of Canada.

The riding of Salaberry—Suroît, which I proudly represent, is poorer than the Canadian average. The average household employment income in my riding is $35,000 compared to the Canadian average of $46,000. If we look at women's income alone, 57% of women live on less than $30,000 a year. I do not think that my riding is unique in this regard. What good is a tax credit when you earn less than $30,000?

● (1750)

Many of these women, whether they live in Beauharnois or the Prairies, do not earn enough money to benefit from the Conservatives' proposed tax credit.

I will wrap up this point by sharing another quote from those researchers in *Le Devoir*, to show, once again, that the Conservatives should have used the Quebec method as a model.

> The QPIP is fairer, since there is just a 10-percentage-point difference in the use of maternity leave among women whose family income is below $30,000 [which corresponds to 85%] and those whose income is higher than $60,000...This gap is more than 30 percentage points in the nine other Canadian provinces (44% of low-income Canadian mothers had access to maternity leave...).

This is why the NDP is proposing that we increase the benefits from 55% to 60%, which would help more Canadian families.

Another point we should look at is the federal system, which goes up to 61 weeks at 33% of the person's pay. The number of weeks is very generous. Would there be a potential for a gradual return to work, during which wages would be topped up and we could ensure a smooth transition to day care for our little babies?

Generally speaking, under the federal system, if an individual works while receiving EI parental benefits, he or she could earn the greater of up to $50 a week or 25% of their weekly benefits. After that, any amount earned is deducted in full from the amount of benefits. It is impossible to live on 33% of one's salary if the claimant has an average income. Furthermore, if the income allowed is 25% of benefits, which represents 33% of earnings, this really hinders a gradual return to work.

In closing, this tax credit will be very costly and will not help the families who really need it the most. A conservative estimate of the cost is $850 million, or about 20% of the cost of buying a pipeline to British Columbia. Why spend so much money on a tax credit that completely misses the mark? If the government wants to improve the parental leave plan, the allocation of resources should address income inequality and improve access to benefits for those who need them most.

In conclusion, the NDP has presented historic measures that would help parents much more than a tax credit for EI benefits. A better way to help new parents on parental leave would be, for example, to increase the income replacement rate.

The NDP is proposing to raise the rate from 55% to 60%. This measure would benefit all parents on leave, not just those who earn enough to pay taxes. This would be a much easier way to fix the situation described by the Conservatives, the solution being to increase the available income of new parents on leave.

Parents returning to work desperately need affordable child care. If we want to allocate substantial public resources to new parents, it is imperative that child care be part of the conversation. Affordable child care is an extremely important issue to Canadian families, so making a tax credit the priority makes no sense.

By lowering the threshold for eligibility for parental leave, we would also be helping more young parents, people in precarious jobs, and part-time workers to qualify for parental leave. The current threshold of 600 hours makes it very hard to qualify. Lowering the threshold would allow more parents to access the system.

If we consider that it is in children's best interest to spend quality time with their parents, especially in the early years, if we call children the apple of our eye, if we say we want to give our children every chance of receiving love and attention and of developing strong bonds with their parents, then I think we need to make it easier for new parents to take parental leave, instead of giving additional resources to people who do not need them. We must not be unfair to people of more modest means who are struggling to make ends meet. In closing, I hope the Conservatives will change their mind and offer solutions that are a little fairer for all Canadians.

● (1755)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member for Louis-Hébert stated that Bill C-394 would not help mothers or fathers who had a small business. I assume he believes this because they may not pay into EI. However, to clarify, while the government is extending parental leave, those same parents who may own small businesses will not have the opportunity to use that benefit because they do not pay into EI.

I am happy to support Bill C-394, the supporting new parents act. I am always proud to stand and support families. They are the cornerstone of our society. When that foundation is strong, it is to everybody's benefit. Unfortunately, under the Liberal government, times right now are really tough for families.

It has been reported that on average middle-class Canadian families are paying more than $800 in additional taxes due to the Liberal government's policies. These are the very people the government claims it is still helping. For my constituents in Saskatchewan, there is a reality that the carbon tax will add significantly to the tax bill, which will be on top of the $800 more they are already paying under the Liberal government.

The Liberals are imposing a carbon tax on the provinces, and it will come at a significant cost to each and every person. In fact, Finance Canada has stated that the Liberals' carbon tax will cost an extra 11¢ per litre just in gasoline alone. When people live in rural Saskatchewan, they have long distances to drive to get just about anywhere, such as the grocery store, the midnight run to Walmart to get diapers, formula, or whatever the case may be. This carbon tax will add up very quickly.

While the government is raising the cost of living for Canadians, it is encouraging to consider the proposed legislation before us, legislation that would actually help new parents keep more of their hard-earned money. The supporting new parents act would deliver real support to families at a time when they need it the most.

The arrival of a child is a happy and exciting occasion for new parents. As a mother, I know this first-hand. My children are my greatest joys. I also know that this milestone comes with many additional costs. New parents will need everything from diapers to wipes to bottles to car seats to strollers to cribs, and that is just the beginning of the list. There is so much more. I have only named a few of the basics. A full list would almost be endless.

By removing the federal income tax from EI maternity and EI parental programs, the supporting new parents act would help alleviate the financial pressures of these additional costs. Certainly, the proposed legislation would be a welcomed relief. When parents can keep more of their take-home benefit, it gives them more choice in deciding whether to stay home with their baby.

Currently, EI maternity benefits are available to a birth mother for up to 15 weeks. Parental benefits are available for up to an additional 35 weeks. Now the parental benefits can be extended up to 61 weeks at a reduced wage replacement.

The opportunity to bond and care for a child in its infancy is so very valuable to mother, baby, and father. I cherished the time I had with both of my children. The existence of the EI maternity and EI parental programs makes that a possibility for so many Canadians.

When we consider this legislation and the price tag that comes with becoming a new parent, it is important for us all to remember that EI benefits are not equal to a person's regular pay. The basic benefit rate is 55% of his or her average weekly pay. That is only a little more than half of a person's regular pay. For parents who choose to extend their parental benefits to the maximum of 61 weeks under the new regulations, their benefit rate is reduced to 33% from 55%.

● (1800)

This means that while new parents are incurring new and additional costs, they are taking home less pay. Then, of the benefits that they do receive, they do not get to keep all of it. As it stands, every Canadian who collects benefits through these programs pays federal taxes on them. Their take-home benefit is being taxed. Some parents are also slapped with a tax bill when they file their taxes.

The parental EI program has some new flexibility, in that parents can choose to extend the length of their parental leave. For many parents this is positive, and the option to stay at home with their child in these early years is preferred. However, this new flexibility has not provided more income to parents. Extended leave means that parents have even less income over an extended period of time. It is great that there is a desire to make these programs more flexible. What we cannot forget is that there are expenses at home regardless. For many parents, this choice may be unaffordable. If that is the case, then it really is not a choice that is available to them.

Rather than just making the parental leave longer, let us also remove the federal tax from these benefits. Let us take a real step to put more money back into the pockets of hard-working Canadians. Let us help offset the cost of a parent who decides to take leave from work to be with their infant. Let us not tax the dollars of taxpayers twice. That is not fair.

With the support of this House, this legislation could deliver significant support to Canadian parents of a newborn or an adopted child. To give an example of the support this legislation would deliver, a Canadian parent with an annual salary of $50,000 would be eligible for a tax credit of $4,000, and $4,000 can go a long way. Depending on where they shop, a box of 128 diapers will cost them, give or take, over $35. With $4,000 more in their pocket, they can buy a lot of diapers.

What this legislation is really offering Canadians is the ability to better meet their family's needs. It takes off some of the financial pressures of becoming a new parent and allows for more flexibility to spend precious bonding time with their children.

I am happy to stand up and support of this legislation. Conservatives are committed to delivering meaningful support to Canadian families. On this side of the House, we understand that the cost of raising a family can really add up and that for many Canadians it is not easy to make ends meet. We know that is particularly true for new parents who are facing new experiences and new expenses with less income.

The legislation we are considering today is an opportunity to support these new parents. It is a chance to strengthen families by giving them financial support when they need it most. When we put more of their hard-earned money back into their pockets, it means they have more money to spend on their priorities. They do not need the government to spend it on their behalf.

We have seen the Liberal government's reckless spending. It only ends up costing Canadian taxpayers more and more. This money is better in the pockets of Canadians. Moms and dads work hard to make ends meet, and they know what their family's needs are. They deserve to keep more of their hard-earned money.

The supporting new parents bill would help a lot of Canadian families. I hope that it will find support on all sides of the House.

● (1805)

**Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House to speak tonight on behalf of my wonderful riding of Saint John—Rothesay.

The riding is a wonderful riding, but is a story of two situations. It is a story of tremendous business wealth and success, and there is a lot of entrepreneurship. It is also a riding that unfortunately leads the country in child poverty and has a very high poverty rate, way above the national average.

In the past election in 2015, I wanted to be a champion, a voice, an advocate for those who needed help but did not have a loud voice, especially here in Ottawa. When I started going door to door in 2015, people told me that the Conservative Party had boutique tax credits, credits that were targeted to a very select segment of the population. The boutique tax credits were there to help someone take ballet lessons or help a family send their kids to piano lessons or play hockey.

The reality is that Bill C-394 is another feeble attempt at a Harper-era tax credit. The credit does not target working families. The credit is not skewed toward reality, and it leaves hundreds of thousands of our children in poverty. The party opposite, with its boutique tax credits, likes to talk about being there for families and being there to give back. For some reason, the party is not there to represent the working-class families that are living in poverty.

The universal child care benefit was for everyone. Whether people made $200,000 or $15,000, they received the same amount. How was that fair? To add to that, it was taxed. Conservatives were taking money back from families that needed it the most; we want to bring children and families out of poverty.

When I went door to door, people were amazed at the audacity of the universal child care benefit. It did not help families that needed it the most. It was a boutique tax credit. We remember during the election the member for Carleton going around in his Conservative golf shirt to communities to hand out tax credits. It was called "Christmas in July". That did not resonate with Canadians. It did not resonate with people in my riding of Saint John—Rothesay.

The first week that I started campaigning for the honour of being a member of Parliament, I went door to door in our priority neighbourhoods, such as Crescent Valley, family by family. People talked about not being able to afford to live. They could not afford to heat their houses or buy groceries. They could not afford books for their children to go to school. It is great to have a boutique tax credit to take kids to ballet or to piano lessons, but people across this country were forgotten by the party opposite for 10 years. People were trying to survive week in and week out with the necessities of life.

● (1810)

Yes, I am a proud Liberal. Yes, I believe that the Liberal Party and federal governments have a duty, an obligation, to provide good national transitional programs, especially for those in need. The Canada child benefit is that program. It is changing lives. It is lifting hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty from coast to coast to coast. When I go door to door now, people are so appreciative that our government came forth with a program that is actually having an impact on their lives. With the Canada child benefit, nine out of 10 families have the extra help they need, month in and month out, to pay for things like healthy food, summer camps, back-to-school clothes, and the necessities of life. That is one of the biggest differences between our party and the party opposite. We believe that we can do good things for Canadians.

I know the members of the party opposite like to wrap themselves up in "We are there for everybody—we are there for the middle class and we are there for people who live in poverty", but let us talk about the tax-free savings account as an example.

The tax-free savings account was a program that was maxed out by 3% of Canadians, yet the party opposite wanted to double that tax-free savings account for Canadians, for the masses. However, it was not for the masses; it was for a select few. If we have hear it once, we hear 10 times a week that this party is mortgaging the future. Even before I ran in politics, I remember listening to *Power and Politics* one night when the finance minister of the party opposite was interviewed. He was asked how the Conservatives were going to pay for doubling the tax-free savings account. He replied, "Don't worry about it. It's okay. The Prime Minister's grandchildren or great-grandchildren can pay for that. We'll pass that down the road."

I remember sitting there in amazement that a finance minister of the party opposite could actually say that he was mortgaging our children's and our children's children's future to double the tax-free savings account, which targeted a very narrow scope of Canadians.

Bill C-394 does the very same thing. It targets a very narrow sector of Canadians. That is why, as a government, we believe in national programs like a national poverty reduction strategy, historic investments in affordable housing, historic investments in child care and early learning, and especially the Canada child benefit.

As I alluded to earlier, my riding leads the country in child poverty. I take great pride in knowing that in my riding, that needle is starting to move to the left because of wonderful programs like the Canada child benefit.

Members of the party opposite have said that they are listening to Canadians and Quebeckers. I know the Leader of the Opposition has a website called "Listening to Quebecers" and that they are in favour of Quebec jurisdictional rights. Well, we are here to listen to Canadians. We believe our programs are the right programs. We will stand behind our programs and do that day in and day out for the betterment of all Canadians.

● (1815)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am proud to support the bill to help new parents introduced by my colleague, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, who is also the leader of our party and, hopefully, the next Prime Minister of Canada.

Our leaders' proposal is very appealing because it is a reflection of the reality we are faced with. In their last budget, the Liberals boasted that they lowered taxes for Canadian families. It is even written in a document put out by the Government of Canada. Well, that is not true, and I am not the only one saying so. The people watching sometimes wonder who is telling the truth. I would refer them to the Fraser Institute, an independent Canadian organization that assesses economic policies.

With the Liberals in power, Canadian families are paying $840 more in taxes because the government eliminated income splitting and tax credits for sports, educational activities, and public transit. The Liberals are also introducing a carbon tax, but they cannot tell us to what extent this will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We had a useful tool to reward people who take the bus, but that tax credit was eliminated by the Liberals.

The Liberals also got rid of tax credits for textbooks and education. That really stings. My mother is a teacher, and I am sure she is disappointed in the Liberals for cutting measures that encouraged parents to buy educational materials for their kids. That is the truth of it.

This government goes on and on about giving more to families and cutting taxes, but that is not actually true. No wonder then that it is opposed to a bill that would give more money back to families. It is their own money, after all, not money that grew on trees, not money they borrowed. We know how much the Liberals love borrowing money. They have hit $17 billion and they are not stopping. They promised modest deficits, but that is now out the window. They got us into such a fix that Canada will not likely see a balanced budget again for decades. That is regrettable because we are a wealthy, resource-rich nation.

As we saw again this week, the Liberals cannot seem to attract private investment. They scare off anyone wanting to invest in our energy resources sector. The only way they could think of to develop the energy sector was to borrow money to buy a company and send all that money to Texas with nary a foot of pipeline built. I am talking about the infamous Trans Mountain project. That is where we stand today.

Our leader is proposing concrete measures. Getting families to stop paying tax on tax is what is at the heart of this private member's bill. I am sure that my colleagues will agree on this. The government is not only taxing families, but it is also taxing the benefits it is giving those families. Our leader says that it is time to fix this situation and give families a break. That is exactly what this private member's bill before us seeks to do. It addresses a very special time in many peoples' lives, including my own, when they become parents. It represents a new life and a child, but also a great deal of responsibility.

Madam Speaker, I imagine that you experienced this and you know that everything happens all at once. You have to buy a stroller, paint the bedroom, and buy furniture and a high chair. My children are all grown up now and I am closer in age to being a grandfather than a new parent.

It is a wonderful time, but it is often young people who are just entering the workforce, who are struggling to make ends meet, and who are sleep deprived. It is a critical time in peoples' lives and we want parents to be able to devote their time to taking care of their children and taking care of themselves during these precious moments.

● (1820)

They need a break. They do not need to be squeezed by the government for even more money.

At the federal level, maternity and parental benefits are provided through employment insurance, but in Quebec, they are provided by the Quebec parental insurance plan. The bill proposes that, in both cases, the government not tax the benefits parents receive while they take care of their families.

It is very simple. I am surprised that my colleagues are opposing this measure. We want to leave money in parents' pockets. They earned it and were already taxed, so why tax the benefit income they receive?

The Conservatives believe that people should come before government. This is how we managed to lower taxes on families before the current government came in. We also managed to do so while balancing the budget and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. That is what you call sustainable development.

The measure our leader is proposing would help parents keep their money and avoid being taxed a second time when they want to spend time with their families. This bill was introduced on February 1 and would represent a tax break for young families.

As members know, we currently have a labour shortage in Canada. My colleague from the Thetford Mines region surely has an experience similar to mine. In Chaudière-Appalaches, there is full employment. Everyone is hiring. We want to attract immigrants, people from all over, and young families who will be able to meet these challenges. This is a good time to have children, because there are some great job opportunities in our country. There will be a deficit, but with the help of Canadians, we will be able to eliminate it, since our leader does not want the government to become insolvent.

Let us go back to the bill that is before us. Its goal is to support new parents and prevent double taxation. It will give a break to families who are on parental leave by giving them a tax break on all income earned under federal EI maternity and parental benefits or under the Quebec parental insurance plan.

Simply put, we want to leave more money in young parents' pockets when they need it the most, that is, when they start a family.

The sums of money are actually quite substantial. For example, for a family income of $50,000, which is not a lot, the potential tax break amounts to $4,000. This significant measure will help families in Quebec and everywhere else.

Basically, we have two opposing views. On one side, the government thinks that budgets balance themselves or that money grows on trees, and throws money around willy-nilly without thinking of the future. On the other side, we are saying that we need to find ways for parents to keep more of their hard-earned money when they need it the most so that they can devote it to their families.

I therefore have no problem supporting the bill sponsored by our leader, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle. I hope the Liberals will experience a surge of good will towards young families and see that this makes sense. It is true that they did not think of it themselves, but perhaps they could support the bill instead of taking money away from these young families and sending it to Texas to buy a pipeline.

In closing, I want to point out that this pipeline was worth $550 million dollars in 2007 and was worth $2.5 billion at the time of purchase, according to the company's books, and yet the government has announced that it is going to pay $4.5 billion for it. That is a lot of money to be tossing out the window that could have been used to buy strollers and decorate nurseries. I deplore this Liberal incompetence.

I support this bill, which will put more money in the pockets of Canadian families.

● (1825)

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Before I recognize the next speaker, I just want to indicate that, unfortunately, I will have to cut the debate short at 6:30. I will now recognize the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I had prepared a number of remarks on this bill. I believe very strongly in the bill and think it is excellent. It should be supported by the House.

Family is dear to the heart of the leader of the opposition, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle. From his own experience, he knows the challenges of raising a young family. It was really disappointing to hear the debate on this bill, and hear what sounded more like excuses than reasons not to support the bill. We heard the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance talk about all kinds of things that had nothing to do with the substance of the bill, and that is disappointing.

This bill is a private member's bill, and it is subject to the limitations of private members' business. It is not able to address every challenge of raising a family. This bill seeks to reduce the tax burden on people who are working and who have to make a decision about how best to spend time with their baby. It enables the parents of newborns to at least reduce their tax burden by eliminating the income tax from their maternity or paternity benefit. What is wrong with that?

This is private members' business; it is unable to solve every problem. We heard excuses about people who do not pay income tax or people who are self-employed. Indeed, these other people have enormous challenges. We cannot fix everyone's issue and we cannot solve everything through a single private member's bill. It is disappointing to hear the excuses that came up in the debate on this bill and the unwillingness to support it.

This bill help reduce taxes on young families, who are confronted with a multitude of costs and expenses at a vulnerable time of life. We are talking about a number of young people who are, in many cases, at the beginning of their careers, young people who have an enormous amount of expenses related to everything from diapers to high chairs to car seats. Those are along with all of the other things that make life expensive, like the cost of housing.

Of course, the most expensive part about life for many Canadians is taxes. This reduces taxes to help young parents be with their children after a baby is born.

● (1830)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It being 6:30 p.m., the time provided for debate has expired.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.



**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 6, 2018, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

* * *

[*Translation*]

## CHILD HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill S-228, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibiting food and beverage marketing directed at children), as reported from the committee.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes:** It being 6:31 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(7), the House will now proceed to the consideration of Bill S-228 under private members' business.

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There being no motions at report stage, the House will now proceed without debate to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 6, 2018, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

[*For continuation of proceedings see Part B*]

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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

## Tuesday, June 5, 2018
## (Part B)

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Tuesday, June 5, 2018**

[*Continuation of proceedings from Part A*]

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

### BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 1

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-74, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to resume debate on Bill C-74.

In the first part of my speech, I presented some interesting arguments to show how the government had no qualms about using time allocation motions last week to prevent members on this side of the House from debating the budget bill longer. However, it is a most important bill for all our constituents.

The mandate letters of the various ministers were made public, and now there is a document entitled, "Mandate Letter Tracker: Delivering results for Canadians", which is a government report card. With regard to the government's promise to balance the budget in 2019-20, the anticipated result was to balance the budget over the long-term and continue to reduce the debt-to-GDP ratio. The government says that results are "underway - with challenges" and it gives itself a good mark, even though the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the Department of Finance are saying that, the way things are going, the government will not balance the budget until 2045. It is absolutely unbelievable. I hope that someone will change that report card to read, "underway with no hope of success" or even "in jeopardy" if we are talking about the current government's economy. I think that "in jeopardy" would be the most appropriate term, not with regard to the Liberals' promise but with regard to the way they are managing our country and government.

They made another big promise. I remember being very impressed, because it was the first Speech from the Throne I had ever attended as a new MP. We filed into the Senate to hear the Governor General deliver the throne speech. One sentence from that speech stayed with me, "...that 2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first-past-the-post voting system." I remember quite well that this was going to be the last election to use that voting method.

This bill is so long and covers so many different subjects that we already did not have enough time to talk about them all. The government decided to include so many things in its budget that, unfortunately, many of us will not have the chance to share our constituents' points of view. However, that is typical of what we have been seeing from this government since it took office in 2015. It makes a lot of promises, but it hardly ever keeps any of them. Case in point, they should not be resorting to omnibus bills that include everything but the kitchen sink. That was one of the promises the Liberals made. Unfortunately, since 2015, the Liberals have imposed 38 time allocation motions to silence opposition members, but it is not just opposition members they are silencing.

The important thing to understand is that cutting off the opposition MPs does not mean the government MPs get more speaking time on these bills. The Liberals outnumber us, so when they pass such a motion, they are depriving more Canadians of their right to have their representative speak in the House. This is completely consistent with the way the government has been running this country since taking office in 2015.

There are many other promises that the government has not kept, such as the promise to post modest deficits. The Liberals practically got elected on that promise. They promised to kick-start the economy by posting very modest deficits, not for very long, just a year or two. They promised to reduce the deficits after that and to balance the budget in 2019-20. These are not my words, they are the government's own words.

What happened next? The Liberals realized that reforming the system would lose them votes. Some Canadians would not vote for them. The reform they had in mind would not have benefited them, so they scrapped the idea.

● (1835)

That's another promise they waved away as though it were something off-putting. The worst part is that they made a committee do a lot of work on it. They made a lot of people work on it. They even set up a website to find out what Canadians were thinking. All of that money was spent for nothing. Once they settled into the government benches, the Liberals' plan for change vanished. They were well aware that the changes Canadians wanted would not work in their favour.

We can forget about greater transparency, as well. In a few minutes, I will talk about the secret they are keeping about the carbon tax and what it will really cost every Canadian family and every Canadian farm. They do not want Canadians to know.

How much will the carbon tax cost Canadian farms? We have asked that question in the House more times than I can count, but we never get an answer. We know the numbers exist. We saw a very nice document that explains how the carbon tax will affect average families. Unfortunately, those are the only legible words in the report. The rest was all redacted and hidden. They are keeping that secret. It seems the promise of greater transparency has gone out the window.

The Liberals also promised not to resort to muzzling the opposition. I am going to skip over that, since I talked about it earlier. I think it is pretty clear.

They promised they would not negotiate away one litre of milk, one egg, or one chicken to the Americans. They promised to protect supply management in all negotiations. What happened? Unfortunately, the Prime Minister does not pay attention to what is said here. He is not interested in what is said here. He is not interested in what the Minister of Finance thinks. He is not interested in what the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie told us here today. When the Prime Minister is speaking to Americans rather than Canadians, he tells the truth, he says what he really thinks. What he said is that he is willing to be more flexible in terms of allowing Americans access to the Canadian dairy market. That is the reality.

On this side of the House, we continue to insist that we need to maintain and protect supply management. Yes, the Liberals are protecting the current system, but there will be nothing left to protect once they are through with it. How much will they trade away to the Americans? Will it be 2%, 4%, or 10%, to save face for the Prime Minister, because he could not reach a deal on NAFTA with them? That is the real question.

We know that this government has a spending problem. When something is not working, it tends to take taxpayers' money to try to fix its own mistakes. We saw this with Kinder Morgan. The government is spending $4.5 billion. It could have done something 18 months ago, when the pipeline was approved, but it did nothing. It could have done something 11 months ago, when the B.C. government clearly expressed its opposition to the pipeline, but it did nothing.

Suddenly he wakes up, realizes there is a problem and that the project will not move forward, and he wonders what to do next.

Instead of taking action, the Liberals decided to pick taxpayers' pockets. It is money that we do not have because the money does not exist. We are already in debt and running a deficit. We are sending this money to the U.S. to let this company build pipelines that will compete with the future pipeline owned by all Canadians, here in Canada. Furthermore, we are buying an aging 60-year-old pipeline. There is no talk of expansion yet, even though the bill that was approved was for the expansion of Kinder Morgan. The $4.5 billion will not expand anything, it will only buy old tubes. In order for this to function, we are going to have to invest another $7 billion, according to the company's estimates.

Thanks to my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent, we learned today that the book value of this 60-year-old pipeline is not $4.5 billion but $2.5 billion. That is the company's evaluation. However, the government decided to pay $4.5 billion. This is completely consistent with the government's way of thinking: it spends without counting taxpayers' money and says that it is all right to spend more because it already has a deficit. That is not right. It will make all the difference to the services that our children will be able to access in 10, 20, or 30 years. They will not be able to access services because all we will have are deficits and debts to pay. That is how this government operates.

The Liberals can oppose the excellent bill introduced by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, which would give more money to young families. They can oppose it and say that they are doing this and that for our young people, and that it is a very targeted tax credit.

● (1840)

Of course, the Liberals cannot support the opposition on a good bill like that. However, they can fork out $4.5 billion for a pipeline that already exists. That does not even include the expansion. The budget was a reflection of this government's management style.

I am the agriculture and agri-food shadow minister, so I would be remiss if I did not take a little time to talk about what budget 2018 has in terms of agriculture. Nothing. There is absolutely nothing in budget 2018 in terms of agriculture. This clearly shows that agriculture is not a priority for the Liberal government.

I figured that I had surely missed something in a budget with so many pages. I rose and asked the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food about what agricultural measures were in budget 2018. The minister rose and started talking about measures adopted in budget 2017, saying that budget 2018 was a good budget for farmers. This shows that the Liberals are completely disconnected from the reality facing farmers.

There are a few local issues we would have liked to see addressed in Bill C-74. In Thetford Mines, for example, we have the Fonds Christian Paradis, which seeks to diversify our regional economy.

The government decided to ban the use of asbestos in Canada. However, there is still a pile of mine tailings in Thetford Mines. The city is surrounded by it. Asbestos is prohibited, but the mine tailings are left there as though nothing happened.

Millions of dollars are available to clean up mining land in uninhabited areas, but when it comes to cleaning up mining land in urban areas where people live, there is nothing. The government needs to assume responsibility for these decisions and make sure that when it decides to shut down an industry that it helps the town return to normal and repair years of mining development. Many governments benefited greatly over all those years from the royalties from asbestos mining.

I wanted to talk about broadband Internet. Despite the programs in place, we still have a lot of problems in our regions. I would have liked a firm decision stating that the Internet is an essential service in every region of Canada. We cannot get far without the Internet these days. Imagine someone who is thinking about buying a house in Piopolis or in Woburn. He is so pleased to have found his dream home. He grabs his cellphone to talk to his wife, to tell her to come see it, but there is no cell signal. The house will stay where it is and he will not buy it.

In closing, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Provencher:

That the amendment be amended by adding the following: "and that the Committee report back to the House no later than June 15, 2018."

● (1845)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The motion is in order.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before we went into private members' hour, my colleague across the way was talking about the issue of time allocation and so forth. Yesterday we spent four or five hours on a reference to a standing committee being able to travel. The other day we had a concurrence motion on one of many different reports.

The opposition has quite a few tools it can use to prevent government from passing legislation. The Conservatives do not want us to pass any legislation, so they move subamendments and amendments to everything. They have even adjourned debate on bills. Conservative members will do whatever it takes to prevent the government from getting its legislation passed. That is why, when I was in opposition, I said that we need time allocation at times.

I wonder if my colleague could provide his thoughts on some of the Conservative tactics to do everything but allow things to come to a vote.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, I completely disagree with the parliamentary secretary's claim that the members on my side of the House do not want any government legislation to pass. That is totally false.

On the contrary, we want all legislation to pass. However, we would like the government to take our comments and recommendations into account. We would like the government to consider our amendments. We would like the government to listen to every MP who has something to say about these bills. We would like it to improve its bills until they are acceptable to all parliamentarians. The opposition's job is to make the government better. Unfortunately, the government refuses to listen to the opposition when we are trying to help make it better. That is why the Liberals are still the worst.

● (1850)

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech to the House on Bill C-74.

This is a gargantuan bill. I think this is the biggest omnibus bill ever seen in the House of Commons. It is about 556 pages long, but it makes virtually no mention of agriculture and agrifood. The federal government needs to make it a priority to invest more in the agriculture sector. We on this side of the House were extremely disappointed to see virtually no mention of agricultural businesses and no support for them.

Could my colleague tell us about the importance of investing in agriculture and agrifood, especially with measures that support young farmers?

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague. She did a great amount of work on agriculture until her appointment as leader.

We can see she is very close to farmers, and I understand the disappointment she felt when we all gathered to listen to the Minister of Finance deliver his budget speech. We were holding our breath not because anything he said was really interesting, but because we were waiting for him to just say the word "agriculture" or make a link of some sort with the agrifood sector. We hoped to hear him say a word about the next generation of farmers. How could we make sure that farms in small rural areas would survive in the short term?

I say in the short term because the existence of many farms is threatened. This week again I was in Stornaway, in my riding. The last farm in Stornaway is for sale because there is no one to take over.

It is a major issue and, unfortunately, we stayed and listened to the Minister of Finance until the end, but the word "agriculture" was never uttered.

**Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I always listen to my colleague for Mégantic—L'Érable with much interest. He surely knows that I still have family living over there. My parents come from this very nice part of Quebec.

Regarding economic growth, I suppose that the employment rate is very good in his riding, Mégantic—L'Érable. The economy must be growing at an incredible rate, just as in the Lower Laurentians, in my riding. Since 2015, 600,000 new jobs have been created. We have the lowest debt to GDP ratio among G7 countries. One thing contributed strongly to that in my riding, and it is the Canada child benefit. On average, in my riding, Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, a family with one child gets $6,400. The Canadian average is $6,600 per year tax-free.

I would like my honourable colleague from the very beautiful riding of Mégantic—L'Érable, where my family lives, to tell me about the results of the Canada child benefit in his riding.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, one thing I will never do is give any government, be it the previous Conservative government or a provincial government, credit for creating jobs in our regions. Jobs are created by small businesses.

In my riding, the people of Thetford Mines have had to grapple with a major crisis. We lost an entire mining industry, and the city lost all its jobs. The reason we were able to recover is that people believed in their region's economy. They believed they could create small businesses and put people to work so they could start families and get tax credits.

It is not the government that creates jobs in Canada and Quebec; it is small and medium businesses. We must all remember that when it is time to choose who to support if we want to see wealth creation. Businesspeople are the ones who take real risks to create real wealth.

● (1855)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I would like to check the member on his last statement. We have the Canada child benefit program. That is a government program that provides millions of dollars every month to Winnipeg North, as an example. That increases disposable income. People are now spending millions of extra dollars they would not have if it were not for this government. That is creating employment opportunities, because many of the small businesses require consumer consumption. That is why we argue it supports Canada's middle class and supports our economy. The government does play a role in working with Canadians to assist in the creation of jobs. That is why we have created over 600,000 jobs by working with Canadians in the last two years.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to answer my hon. colleague's questions. He is a seasoned parliamentarian, and he always asks excellent questions.

However, he forgot one thing. Government money comes from taxpayers. The money the government redistributes all over the place comes from me and from all job creators.

My colleague asked me if they created 600,000 jobs. To him I can say what I said earlier: they did not create a thing; businesspeople created those jobs in Canada.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, clearly, it is always important to talk about the economy and about the money that the government has at its disposal and that it can redistribute. However, there has to actually be money available to do that.

According to my colleague, who used to be the mayor of a town that was prohibited by law to run deficits, is it normal for a government to compulsively run deficits?

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, no, it is not normal.

Every year that a city runs a deficit, the first tax dollar it receives goes toward reimbursing the previous year's debt. By following that rule, it is impossible for a government to run deficits. It is forced to properly manage the public purse and make good choices, not for itself but for residents. If residents are forced to pay too many taxes, one day they will revolt. That is what is going to happen in 2019, when Canadians vote the Liberals out of office.

[*English*]

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am really pleased to be here to speak to Bill C-74, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures.

I want to begin by making some general remarks about what we have been doing as a government since our arrival almost two and a half years ago. The key message I want to leave with Canadians and members of the House this evening is this: that we have a plan and that our plan is working, that we chose to invest in our people, that we chose to invest in our country, that we did not choose to cut, that we did not choose austerity, that we left those choices to other political persuasions in this House.

Our plan is undoubtedly, objectively, and factually working. Over the last two years, Canada's economic growth has been fuelled by a stronger middle class. Canadians' hard work, combined with historic investments in people and communities, chiefly in infrastructure, such as light rail here in the great region of the national capital region of Ottawa-Carleton, has helped to create more good jobs—almost 600,000 since November 2015—while more help for those who need it most has meant more money for people to save, invest, and spend in their communities.

At the same time, and it is important for Canadians to know this, with respect to unemployment at the national level, the jobless rate stayed at 5.8% in March for a second consecutive month, and for the third time since December, to match its lowest mark since Statistics Canada started measuring the indicator in 1976. The only other time the rate slipped to this level was in 2007. That is the lowest unemployment level in Canada in 42 years.

At the local level, right here in our national capital region, which I have the privilege of representing, we added 2,500 net new jobs in February, helping to push down the local unemployment rate to 5.1% in February from 5.2% in January. However, in March it dropped to 4.9%, and in April it dropped again to 4.2%, the region's unemployment rate remaining well below that of the country as a whole. That is a 30-year low in the national capital region, so the economy is on fire and unemployment is way down. It is dropping.

Canada has the best balance sheet in the G7, with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, which we are convening and hosting here next week in Canada. Our debt as a function of our economy is steadily shrinking. It is projected to soon reach its lowest point in almost 40 years. That means that Canada has the confidence to make investments in our future that will strengthen and grow the middle class. It will lay a more solid foundation for the next generations of Canadians to come. It means we can retrofit our core infrastructure—housing, transit, post-secondary institutions, and research and development—and we can partner with our provincial and municipal partners to leverage additional billions of dollars of investment in those four critical areas of our future by co-operating. It has been a central tenet of the government's approach since it arrived two and a half years ago to leverage as much support as we can from other orders of government for priority investments.

Budget 2018, entitled "Equality + Growth: A Strong Middle Class", supports the government's people-centred approach. It is guided by a new "gender results framework" and proposes to ensure that every Canadian has a real and fair chance at success. This is about taking the next steps to build an equal, competitive, sustainable, and fair Canada where science, curiosity, and innovation spur economic growth.

● (1900)

Here are some of the key budget 2018 measures that the bill aims to implement, which I want to spend a bit of time sharing with Canadians.

First, I want to remind Canadians of this. The budget introduces a new Canada workers benefit. We know that Canadians are working very hard to join the middle class and they deserve to have their hard work rewarded with greater opportunities for success. That is why we are introducing the new Canada workers benefit. It is a more generous and more accessible benefit, which will put more money in the pockets of low-income workers than the working income tax benefit, the so-called WITB that it replaces.

The CWB will replace both maximum benefits and the income level at which the benefit is phased out. As a result, low-income workers, earning $15,000 for example, could receive up to almost $500 more in 2019 to invest in things that are important to them. By allowing more low-income workers to keep more of their paycheques, this will deliver real help to more than two million Canadians who are working hard to join the middle class, raising about 70,000 Canadians out of poverty.

Why is that important? It is important because the economic consensus is clear. Only a foolish country, only a foolish jurisdiction would let its people slide behind. Only a foolish country would not want to avail itself of all the talent in its talent pool by giving effect to it, by helping to shape it, to educate it, and to give it an opportunity to move forward, and prosper. Therefore, the first big announcement in the budget is the Canada workers benefit of which we are more than proud.

The second thing I want to remind Canadians about is what we are doing with the Canada child benefit. The Canada child benefit was introduced in 2016. We are strengthening that very benefit in this budget. We know from our last year and a half of experience that nine out of 10 Canadian families have extra help each and every month to pay for things like nutritious food, sports programs, music lessons, school supplies, and the basics. Families receiving this Canada child benefit are getting about $6,800 on average in payments this year. Millions of dollars, for example, are being shared with families in my riding of Ottawa South every month to provide that very help.

To ensure that the almost six million children who currently benefit from the CCB continue to benefit from it in the long term, here is a big change. We are indexing the Canada child benefit, starting this July, so it continues to increase in value every year going forward. For a single parent of two children making $35,000 a year, a strengthened CCB will mean $560 more next year, tax free, for books, skating lessons or warm clothes for winter.

To help more families access the Canada child benefit and other benefits, budget 2018 will also provide funding to reach out to more indigenous Canadian communities that face distinct barriers when it comes to accessing federal benefits.

As Canada's economy continues to grow and creates good, well-paying jobs, the government will ensure that all Canadians share in and benefit from the success.

Just recently I received a phone call from a single mom in my riding. She makes $14 an hour, soon $15 an hour with the Ontario minimum wage increase. She was in tears of gratefulness. As a single mom of three children, she receives almost $9,000 a year, tax free, of additional support. She told me she could not make ends meet without that support and would have to look for new housing. She would have to move her three kids into a one bedroom apartment, as opposed to a two bedroom apartment. I think that makes a difference in that mother's life. I think it makes a difference in those three children's lives.

Turning more specifically to the economy itself, I want to talk about lower taxes for small businesses in Canada and some of the opportunities for all Canadians that flow from those lower taxes.

● (1905)

Despite what people may say otherwise, the fact is that our government is lowering taxes on small businesses, from 11% in 2015 to 9% by 2019. This will leave more money for small business owners to reinvest in their business and create jobs, up to $7,500 more per year. We know that 99.8% of all Canadian businesses are 100 employees or less. That is the lion's share of the economy. We are targeting those very businesses with those small business tax drops.

As we move ahead with the small business tax rate reduction, we are taking action to ensure the small business rate is not used to gain unfair tax advantages. We are proposing to take further steps to limit the ability of very high-income earners to use private corporations to hold millions of dollars in passive investment portfolios and receive significant tax benefits. We consulted widely about his, and we listened. The design of these proposals is based directly on the feedback we received during those consultations.

With these proposals, less than 3% of private corporations would be affected. Ninety per cent of the tax impact would be borne by households in the top 1%; that is the very wealthiest of hard-working Canadians.

Why is it important to focus on small businesses? Because eight out of 10 jobs are being created today by small businesses. Therefore, we will continue to support our entrepreneurs and owners of SMEs as we move forward.

Another theme, which I believe is indispensable for the future of our economy, and for that matter our well-being and survival, is the question of addressing carbon pollution, climate change, and supporting clean growth. As has been said in the House many times, a clean environment and a strong economy go hand in hand.

We have decided to make further investments toward a healthy and sustainable low carbon economy going forward, one that creates growth and middle-class jobs, while preserving our natural heritage for future generations. In fact, globally, this is the trend. We are embroiled in a race. It is a competitive race that involves the United States, China, Indonesia, and the Congo. Pretty much every country is involved now in the global race to retool their economies. They are in a global race targeting efficiency. It is about becoming more efficient with energy, with water, with material inputs, more efficient when it comes to transportation of goods, and more efficient in minimizing waste. All of these efficiency races that we are running are global races, so we have no choice. From an economic perspective alone, we have no choice but to get on that track and run that race.

Some would have us not even lace up our running shoes. We believe that would be a mistake. Jurisdictions all over the world understand that is the competitive edge, which is why we have decided, like every European Union country, like so many other jurisdictions in the world, to put a price on carbon pollution. It is central to Canada's plan to fight climate change and grow the economy. Economists everywhere have told us this. They recognize that this is one of the most effective, transparent, and efficient ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

It is the use of a market mechanism to achieve an environmental outcome. That is why Ronald Reagan and the Republicans in the United States negotiated a deal with then prime minister Brian Mulroney to use the cap and trade system to eliminate NOx and SOx, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxides, from American power plants burning coal to generate electricity. That is how we eliminated acid rain in North America. That is how we were able to protect so much of our freshwater systems in the American and North American northeast. It is in fact an idea that comes from the right. It comes from the Conservative or Republican-leaning thinkers in most economic schools of thought.

● (1910)

That is why Preston Manning supports the use of pricing carbon. That was why Stephen Harper went to London, England, and gave a major energy superpower speech to the world's energy top executives, saying he was moving to price carbon. He even gave them a planned price by 2018 for a tonne of carbon dioxide.

In December 2016, the Government of Canada, along with most provinces and territories, worked with our indigenous partners and adopted a pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. The framework includes an approach to pricing carbon pollution, with the aim of having carbon pricing in place across Canada by 2018. However, the kicker is that provinces and territories will have the flexibility to choose between two systems: an explicit price-based system, or a carbon tax; and a cap and trade system, which is in place, for example, in Ontario, whereas B.C. has chosen a carbon tax. We know that 80% of Canadians already live in jurisdictions where a price on carbon exists. Therefore, Canada will move forward and build on those provincial successes to make the progress we need to make.

This is not only about doing good; this is about doing well economically. There are vast markets to conquer. There are huge energy efficiency opportunities and technological opportunities all over the planet, for which Canadian entrepreneurs can conquer and compete. That is why it is so important for us to marry both carbon pricing and support for our clean tech sector, which is why one of our primary investments, when it comes to supercluster innovation hubs, is in the area of supporting clean growth technologies going forward.

I will now speak on an issue which is fundamental to many of my constituents and tens of thousands of seniors in Canada, and that is the Canada pension plan. As an MP for 14 years, I have been fighting for this both in and out of government. For over a decade, I have been trying to see progress made on the CPP. I am extremely proud of the fact that our government made a commitment to Canadians to help them realize their goal of a strong, secure, and stable retirement. It was, after all, Paul Martin, as minister of finance, and I think we can objectively agree in the House on all sides, who ensured that our CPP was actuarially sound for at least 85 years going forward.

We can compare and contrast that with the American social security system. The last time I looked at it, I was informed its shelf life was about 18 months. The distinction is that the Americans have not retrofitted, they have not reformed, they have not worked to ensure a safe and stable retirement fund for their people the way we have here in Canada.

Every three years, finance ministers review the Canada pension plan together to ensure we continue to respond to the needs of Canadian retirees, workers, and employees.

In this budget, we want to build on the strong partnership on the historic agreement signed in 2016, a major breakthrough to enhance the Canada pension plan for everyday working Canadians. The 2016 agreement will increase the maximum CPP retirement pension by about 50% over time. That is an incredible step forward. At their recent meeting, finance ministers agreed to strengthen the Canada pension plan to provide greater benefits, for example, to parents whose incomes dropped after the birth or adoption of their children, or to persons with disabilities, or to spouses who were widowed at a young age, and to the estates of lower-income contributors.

It is important not to allow our retirees to slip into poverty. Poverty costs. It costs much more at the back end than it does at the front end, which is why we are addressing this issue of poverty as best we can going forward. Is it perfect? Not nearly. Are we making progress? Absolutely, we are. Canadians are counting on us to continue to work in this regard.

All of these changes to the CPP will be done in this budget without any increase to the Canada pension plan contribution rates paid by workers and employers. Ministers agreed to move forward with regulations to ensure the CPP enhancement would remain appropriately funded over time.

● (1915)

Finally, I want to talk about support for Canada's veterans. Our government is committed to the well-being of veterans and their families. We have delivered in this bill on a pension-for-life option. We are looking forward to making progress in that regard. It is a monthly payment for life, tax-free—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Unfortunately, time is up. I am sure the member will be able to provide anything he may not have been able to finish through questions and comments.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in this debate. I welcome the fact that the hon. member made an interesting speech. He presented and tabled some of his ideas and the policies defended by his government, but he also failed to recognize the difficulties Canadians will have to address thanks to this budget.

First of all, when the member was elected less than three years ago, he was elected on a platform of small deficits and zero deficit in 2019. The reality of the day is a huge deficit, three times more than expected, and zero idea when we will get back to a zero deficit.

I would like to know from the member what he thinks of the results of the government, which was elected on a precise promise on deficits and has put it in the garbage.

**Hon. David McGuinty:** Madam Speaker, I want to remind my colleague that I was in fact elected 14 years ago, but he is right, I was elected to the government for the second time two and a half years ago. It is an honour to have been elected to serve in that regard.

I want to remind the member, who was himself more recently elected, that under the previous government, in fairness, and objectively, the national debt was increased by $160 billion. It is true that the previous government faced the 2008 economic crisis, as did the Canadian provinces. It is true that for some sectors, the government begrudgingly worked, for example, with the Province of Ontario to provide assistance to the auto sector. Of course, since then, every loan has been paid back with interest.

It is important to remember that we had a choice to make, and it was a stark choice. The Conservative Party ran on a platform of austerity and cuts, and we ran on a platform of investing in Canadians and in core infrastructure. This is our moment not just to keep the pump primed but to lay the groundwork for a century of success for Canadians by making sure that we have the hard infrastructure we need and that more and more Canadians are joining the middle class and have great, equal opportunities to succeed, contribute, and thrive.

● (1920)

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I wonder how often the member actually gets out of the Ottawa bubble, because the jobs he says are being created in this area, government jobs, are not translating into rural Canada. In Saskatchewan, the unemployment rate has gone up two per cent since the government has been in power. In fact, in the last month, it has gone up 0.2% again. We are seeing people without jobs.

He talked a bit about the infrastructure building. There are no infrastructure builds going to rural Saskatchewan. I am wondering if he can comment on that.

**Hon. David McGuinty:** Madam Speaker, I would just remind my good friend that in the national capital region, the top employer is, in fact, the tourism sector, followed by the government sector, followed by 2,800 IT firms. Now, it was 5,000 high tech firms at one point. We were called Silicon Valley North. We are working hard, as a community, to reclaim some of that space. We are very proud of the investments our government is making across the country, including in Saskatchewan right now in one of the superclusters, to help give rise to new start-ups and new companies to compete and to win.

When it comes to the question of unemployment and investments, the numbers are undeniable. These are the lowest unemployment rates in 42 years across the country. It is the lowest unemployment in the greater national capital region, in 18 ridings, in 30 years. Clearly, something is working. We believe that we have the right combination of investing, stimulating the economy, providing the right tax incentives, investing in our people, supporting research and development, and helping our competitive companies conquer global markets through EDC and other institutions. We believe that we have put together the right kind of amalgamated approach, which increasingly is the envy of the world.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my colleague had the chance to remind everyone that he was elected 14 years ago and served his constituents for that period of time.

We have to remember that there is a lot of inequality here in Canada, and it seems to be increasing. A promise the Liberals made during the election campaign was to table legislation to deal with pay equity. We know that the latest census data show us that indigenous women in Ontario face a 43% gender pay gap. Racialized women face a 38% pay gap. Immigrant women face a 34% pay gap. Why did the Liberals not include anything to deal with this in the budget?

**Hon. David McGuinty:** Madam Speaker, I first want to agree with my colleague that pay equity is a big challenge for Canada. It is an area and a theme we have to work harder on addressing. It is one that manifests unfairness in the workplace. It hearkens back to something I said earlier in my remarks. When it comes to gender, when it comes to country of origin, and when it comes to linguistic background, it does not really matter, does it now? Only a foolish country would not want to avail itself of all the talent within its borders. That is exactly what we are trying to do with this budget and the budgets that preceded it and the ones that we hope will follow it, which is to give the support Canadians need to get the best out of themselves so that we, as a people, can continue to build a society that is not only fair, where there is equality of opportunity, but that is effectively the envy of the world.

I like to remind people all the time that an economy is not a society and a society is not just an economy. It is actually more. We are trying to bring in a series of balanced measures that will address exactly the kind of important issue the member has raised here this evening to make progress.

Once again, I had the privilege of living and working in over 70 countries for a decade, before being elected to this House, while serving as a public servant in another setting. Let me assure this House of one thing I have retained since that time and still see now: Canada is increasingly being seen as the envy of the world and is leading as an example that is worthy of following.

■ (1925)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if my colleague could talk about the importance of infrastructure. It is so critically important that we invest in Canada's infrastructure, and that infrastructure takes many forms. I know that my colleague has given a great deal of thought to the importance of supporting Canada's middle class, and one of the ways we can do that is by investing in infrastructure. Could he provide his thoughts on that?

**Hon. David McGuinty:** Madam Speaker, it is 2018. So much of the infrastructure we benefit from in this country was built perhaps 50 or maybe even 100 years ago. It is time to invest for the future.

Let us take, for example, light rail investments or transit investments in our major urban areas. The city of Montreal is now 53% of the population of Quebec. Gatineau, right across the river, is the fastest-growing city in Quebec. Metropolitan Toronto is pushing eight million people. We are increasingly becoming an urban country. There are merits to that. There are challenges to that. We are investing very heavily in light rail and transit systems with our provincial and municipal partners.

A second area we are investing very heavily in is water and wastewater systems. We are blessed with so much fresh water, one of the most precious resources we possess in this country, and we have an obligation to protect it. We have to reinvest in our water and wastewater systems to stop waste, because so many water systems are leaking so much water. We have to improve secondary and tertiary water-treatment systems. By the way, as we do that, we develop and implement technologies that can be sold all over the world.

In housing, we are talking about green housing. We are talking about housing that is affordable for our needy, for our veterans, and for our seniors. We are talking about energy efficiency when it comes to housing. We are making progress in infrastructure, not just because it has to be replaced but because it has to be replaced to higher energy efficiency standards and water standards.

It goes back to what I was saying earlier. That is the race. As we do more of that here in Canada, we can sell more technology, more know-how, and more products, and that is exactly how we have tied together these investments in infrastructure with our foreign global market opportunities.

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-74, the budget implementation act. This piece of legislation is concerning for a number of reasons, including the fact that it is an omnibus bill that is not being given proper consideration, as the Liberals continually shut down debate.

The Liberals promised not to use time allocation or omnibus bills in this way, but we have unfortunately learned that keeping promises to Canadians is not the government's forte. To name a few, do electoral reform and an end to first past the post, an end to omnibus bills, or balanced budgets sound familiar?

During his campaign, the Prime Minister committed to running a deficit of up to $10 billion during his time in government, with a promise to balance the budget by 2019. We now know that this was patently false. This year's budget is $18 billion and climbing, and the Liberals have added $60 billion-plus to the national debt in just three years. Figures show that the budget will not return to balance until 2045, and now we have nationalized a pipeline with public money, when private money would have done it. We cannot forget the fact that in this budget, there are no plans if NAFTA fails.

The Liberals keep adding to their reckless spending. In football, they would call a penalty for piling on.

In Saskatchewan, we have a tradition at the Kinsmen Kinettes Telemiracle fundraiser, when throughout the event, the show host puts up the totals board and chants, "Where are we going to go?", and the audience replies, "Higher". I would point out, however, that this is with private money, not public money, unlike for the Liberals, who throw taxpayer dollars around like it is nothing.

This means that our children and grandchildren will have to foot the bill for the government's reckless spending. The Liberals fail to see that their spending is actually being done at the expense of the very people they claim they are trying to help: the middle class and those who wish to join it.

This omnibus bill contains many provisions, but the most important one for my constituents, and indeed for all people in Saskatchewan, is the carbon tax, yet while the government has the numbers, it will not tell Canadians what it will cost them.

As many members in the House know, the oil and gas industry has suffered greatly in recent years. In my hometown of Estevan, I witnessed the exodus first-hand. Many companies were forced to shut down, and not just those directly in the energy industry. The trickle-down effect killed services too, and restaurants and hotels were forced to close, because the business just was not there anymore. It was and still is a hard time, and we have not bounced back anywhere close to where we were in the past, though the Liberals seem to think that the hard times are over.

Canadians who bought houses now have no jobs or have jobs that pay significantly less, and they cannot afford to pay for the houses they have. Innovation jobs and infrastructure jobs do not exist, and there is nothing for them to grasp onto, not to mention that everyone in the community is in the same boat, and there is no confidence to buy a house or in the housing market generally.

Now, here comes the carbon tax.

I am proud to be from Saskatchewan, the province that thus far has refused to bend to the federal government on its forced carbon tax. The provincial government understands what the federal Liberals do not, that the people of Saskatchewan simply cannot afford another tax, especially since Canadians across our country are already paying more tax under this Liberal government.

This budget gives $1.4 billion to provinces that have signed on to the government's climate agenda. Of the four maritime provinces that have signed on, not one has a carbon scheme or plan. One has a tax that it will rename.

Saskatchewan has a plan and is denied access to these funds. We have learned time and time again that if one does not conform to Liberal values and ideals, there will be a penalty to pay.

When the Government of Saskatchewan put forward its plan to reduce emissions, it was immediately rejected by the federal Minister of Environment. It is her way or the highway.

Saskatchewan's climate change strategy was well thought out, taking into account all aspects of the province. However, it was not deemed good enough by the Liberals here in Ottawa. There was seemingly no consideration given for the work that is already being done in my province to reduce emissions.

● (1930)

I would argue that farmers in my riding have a far better grasp of climate change than the majority of Canadians. These men and women have been stewards of their land for generations. They have spent time, money, and energy in trying to figure out the best, lowest-impact methods to farm, such as zero tillage, air seeding, and crop rotation, which put in and take out nitrogen and carbon from the soil. However, the budget had no mention of farmers at all. Not one word.

Farmers are the epitome of innovation. They have done it through centuries, through droughts, floods, and grasshopper infestations, all of which come regularly and are dealt with using the skill sets these people have developed over generations. They respect the land, because it is their livelihood, and it is only reasonable to assume that these individuals would do whatever possible to ensure they are farming in the most sustainable and responsible way.

Instead of helping out these farmers and ranchers, the Liberals are making their lives significantly more expensive and difficult with a carbon tax. They will now need to pay more for fuel, a huge expense in any farming operation; more for supplies, because transportation of these pieces will go up, and it is not like there is a manufacturer around the corner in rural Saskatchewan; and more for labour. I would be lax if I did not mention that the Liberal government implied that farmers and small business owners were tax cheats.

I have not spoken to a single agriculture producer in my riding who is in favour of a carbon tax, despite what the Liberals claim. Again, the federal government is absolutely failing when it comes to helping the middle class. Perhaps those in the middle class only matter when they are willing to donate to the Liberal Party of Canada, because my constituents do not feel valued by their Prime Minister and his members of Parliament.

One thing that frustrates me in this discussion on the carbon tax in relation to Bill C-74 is that there is almost no consideration given to the work already being done in Saskatchewan to reduce emissions. The coal-fired power plant in Estevan at Boundary Dam utilizes a world-first technology in one of its generators, which has been proven not only to reduce emissions but also to utilize the by-products of this technology, like sulphur, sulphuric acid, and fly ash for cement to the benefit of other industries.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that the carbon is sequestered in the ground. It is called carbon capture and sequestration, CCS, although members may not have heard of it since the minister does not champion it beyond saying, "I've been there". The public safety minister has stood up and said that he started a study on CCS 25 years ago, yet where is he today, and where is the promotion of CCS at Boundary Dam? It was the Conservative government of Stephen Harper that gave $250 million dollars towards it and actually championed this new technology.

CCS is a technology that allows emissions from coal-fired power plants to be captured and sequestered kilometres underground. Since it has been in operation, the CCS facility at Boundary Dam has already captured and removed over two million tonnes of the $CO_2$ emissions from the environment. This is the equivalent to roughly 500,000 cars being taken off our roads.

As I said, this is a world-first technology. Governments across the world regularly send envoys to Boundary Dam so they can take a look at using this technology to reduce their emissions as well. It is green, it is innovative, yet it gets barely any recognition from the government.

The western states in the U.S. have signed a memorandum of understanding for further investigation of CCS. The country of Taiwan is interested in the technology, as they are shutting down their five nuclear power plants. With all that said, the budget will give $500 million to a foreign infrastructure bank to build pipelines and coal energy plants in China without this technology. Here is where the Public Safety Minister could say, "Let's keep the money at home in Canada."

It is absolutely frustrating that the Minister of Environment fails time and again to give Saskatchewan and the CCS technology in Estevan its due. The Minister of Public Safety, the lone minister for Saskatchewan, does not champion his own province's initiatives to reduce emissions. It is shameful, and even more so since it is the good people of Saskatchewan who must ultimately pay the price.

Bill C-74 would mean that costs will go up across the board because of this carbon tax. I will repeat that while the Liberals know the cost, they will not tell Canadians. Canadians are sick and tired of being told they need to pay more money when their federal government keeps spending recklessly and adding more and more to our national debt.

● (1935)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very interested in what my colleague has to say. A few moments ago he talked about the investments that our government made in the environment and research when we were in office.

In my riding, there is a company called $CO_2$ Solutions, which seeks to find environmentally friendly solutions to reduce the environmental impact of our oil production, particularly with regard to the oil sands. $CO_2$ Solutions has been working with the Department of Natural Resources for over 10 years.

When we were in office, we also established the ecotrust program to the tune of over $1.5 billion. With the support of the provinces, we made investments in the environment and in research in order to improve the environment.

Obviously, there are also these types of businesses in my colleague's riding. Can my colleague tell us more about the businesses in his riding and his province that worked with the Conservative government to improve environmental costs?

● (1940)

[*English*]

**Mr. Robert Kitchen:** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear the hon. member's comments. He works tirelessly for his constituents, and I commend him for that.

The CCS plant that I have mentioned takes the carbon and sequesters it under the ground, which enhances the industry and the oil industry, as well as cement companies, who capture and use the fly ash, shipping it off and selling it. They take 98% of the sulfur out of the air, which they then utilize and sell.

As well, our farmers take the benefit of their knowledge and sequester that carbon into the ground. The simple fact of photosynthesis that everybody learned about in grade 9 is basic science, and our farmers in this country do that all the time, and yet no credit is given to them for that.

I would like to mention one other, and that is the fact that in my riding, just about a half hour away from where I live, they are starting an investigation plant for geothermal energy, taking the geothermal and pumping pipes many miles underground. I cannot remember exactly how many miles it is. However, they are utilizing that to generate thermal energy, to see how beneficial it would be for a possible five megawatt energy plant.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when I look at the bigger picture and at what has taken place over the last two to two and a half years, I see a very healthy economic plan that, between the Government of Canada and Canadians, generates the types of jobs that are necessary, 600,000-plus.

We have seen the enhancement of some fantastic social programs that have lifted individuals, whether seniors or children, out of poverty. We are talking about tens of thousands of Canadians in all regions of the country.

We can talk about the infrastructure. The Government of Canada has done so much to invest in Canada's middle class.

Would my colleague across the way not agree that by investing in Canada's middle class, we are actually investing in our economy because it is our middle class that ultimately drives our economy? A healthy middle class means a healthy Canadian economy. That is what the government has been focused on for the last two and a half years.

**Mr. Robert Kitchen:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member had a number of points in his question, and I would like to address one or two of them.

Perhaps the member did not hear my speech, where I talked about the loss of jobs in Saskatchewan, where the unemployment rate has gone up since the Liberal government came to power. That is not creating jobs. It may be creating jobs in his community; that is where the government is building infrastructure. However, there is no infrastructure being built in my province.

It is not like the government is building a green transit line from Maryfield, Saskatchewan to Regina so that one person can take that train. It is not happening. It is not going to change the patterns that rural Canadians have to live with.

**Mr. Alexander Nuttall (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start my speech by recognizing that tomorrow is the 74th anniversary of the storming of Juno on D-Day. On behalf of the Conservative caucus and the people of Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, to those who sacrificed their lives, who fought for freedom, who went through pain and danger that we cannot even imagine today, I say thanks so very much. Without them, we would not be working in the best Parliament in the best country in the world. We thank our veterans so very much.

This is my second opportunity to speak on the budget. When I had an opportunity to speak last week, we were talking about a number of items. We talked about Kinder Morgan, the many issues in this budget relating to youth, including the amount of debt we are leaving them with. After I spoke, the Auditor General's report was released. He had an incredibly scathing report in his spring audits, and there were two that really stuck out. In fact, the first line of the Auditor General's report refers to "incomprehensible failures", not just one but many, with the Phoenix pay system. I acknowledge that the system was developed over two governments and implemented by the current one, but certainly the failure of government, the culture of government, and the failing culture of government was at the centre of the Auditor General's report.

One of the audits was on indigenous affairs. When I was knocking on doors, every single day I would hear people say they just do not get it. They would say they live in the best country in the world, in a country that has one of the best qualities of life, but there are Canadians who do not have clean drinking water and do not have the same opportunities. They said they just do not get it. They said they would hear all the announcements from government after government of all stripes, indicating that so much money is going to indigenous affairs, for a certain program or for the education of aboriginal young people, and yet it feels like it never changes, that this is a perennial issue that constantly has to be dealt with.

The Auditor General, in his opening remarks to his 12 audits, said:

> The ministerial focus on the short term explains why the Indigenous file has been so intractable. A long-term view has to dominate that file, but because it usually only brings political problems in the short term, government tries to stay in the safe space of administering payments instead of being an active partner with Indigenous people to improve outcomes.

This next line is the crux of the issue. It states, "The measure of success has become the amount of money spent, rather than improved outcomes for Indigenous people." I feel like we can apply that across government as a whole. How many programs do we fund and tell people how much money we are going to spend on said program, but we never tell them what the effects will be of the money being spent?

It is deplorable. People in the private sector are measured by their results. Yes, the effort put in counts. Yes, research and data count. However, the real data that counts is the data that comes out the back end that says *x* number of dollars have been spent and *x* has been achieved. The Auditor General recognizes this, but, unfortunately, the government culture does not.

● (1945)

From what I have seen, it certainly extends into the current Liberal government. I was at the industry committee about a year and a half ago when Minister Bains came and the government had funded—

**The Speaker:** I would remind the hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte that he should not use members' names.

**Mr. Alexander Nuttall:** Yes, I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Innovation joined us. One of the programs the government had funded was the car of tomorrow program. Interestingly, the previous government had put in a few bucks as well, but there was now a $20-million investment taking place into that program.

I asked the obvious question: What is it that the people of Canada, the ratepayers, the citizens are getting in return for $20 million of investment? He proceeded to give an answer. I asked what the measurables were. It was an answer that did not give me measurables. I asked how many jobs were being created. Three to five, I believe, was his answer.

The report actually said that three to five jobs were indirectly created, meaning that we were investing $20 million as a government in a program that created zero jobs. That is the problem of the political class within government, the culture that exists, and we see it over and over again in the budget this year.

The Auditor General said it more succinctly:

> In the current culture, the two perspectives are out of balance, with the political perspective being dominant. This is largely because of instant digital communication, which means that politicians are more concerned with message and image management.

When I came to Ottawa to represent the people of Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, I really hoped that the most important thing would always be the people we serve. However, we see in announcement after announcement that it is not about the people we serve, or there would be measurables put in place. It is actually about looking good in front of the public.

That will not do for our citizens. It will not do for the taxpayers we represent. Again, last week we saw a $4.5-billion investment into Kinder Morgan when the private sector was walking away. I will call it an investment, although I am not sure it is one. The Liberals say they are trying to de-risk the project. They are not de-risking the project; they are de-risking the owners and investors of Kinder Morgan and then taking that risk and putting it on the taxpayers of Canada.

This is the type of spending we are seeing. There are no measurables in place. I wonder whether the $7-billion fund that is being staked out by the treasury, the fund we do not know where it is being spent, is where the $4.5 billion for Kinder Morgan is coming from.

It did not matter whether I was at the municipal level of government or in the private sector, in finance; one thing was always consistent: There need to be measurables put in place when the government is investing dollars. As I look through the budget, it talks about spending, spending, spending, but it fails to talk about how it is actually going to influence the lives of Canadians, the measurables that are being put into effect to show us that the dollars are actually well spent.

It may come at some point during the year, and if it does, I will be the first to congratulate the Liberals, but I have a feeling, based on the last two and a half years and perhaps even longer, considering it is not just the current government, that it will not happen. I ask the government to start putting measurables in place for the dollars it is spending so the taxpayers and citizens of Canada know that the dollars being spent on their behalf, taxpayers' dollars, not government dollars, are spent correctly.

● (1950)

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his plea, which is a plea that comes from business, where the mantra is usually "You can't manage what you don't measure." I would like to give an example of managing what one measures. At the Treasury Board, we are making progress when it comes to the government's own greenhouse gas emissions and efficiencies. The Treasury Board is now moving, under Bill C-57, which is linked to this budget bill, to measuring the GHG emissions from its fleet and buildings, and very actively reporting to Canadians. Canadians will be able to see the progress that is being made. They will understand the expenditures that are being made to retrofit buildings and to lease better buildings in order to reduce the overall emissions. Canadians can get a much better sense of value for money.

I think the member would agree with me that this is one example where the government deserves a bit of credit for moving the yardstick forward to be judicious and wise with Canadian taxpayer dollars, to be able to show that in fact we are making progress, and if we are not, Canadians can hold us to account accordingly.

● (1955)

**Mr. Alexander Nuttall:** Mr. Speaker, if there are places within the government's programs where the Liberals are putting measurables in place, then I congratulate them. The problem is that, if there are, it is not the norm. When we look at the spending that is being outlined, we have $60 billion in new spending over the last three years. Where are the measurables for $60 billion in new spending? If we are investing in a tax cut, can the government show me what the measurables are, and what the projected measurables are against the end result on a year-over-year basis? We are just not seeing it. In fact, the GDP has grown 0.1% in two years, but spending has gone up far more significantly.

These are major issues that need to be dealt with, and the only people who lose by our not measuring the effects of our spending are the taxpayers. They are the ones who do not get to see the accountable government they believe should exist. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to step up, measure, and ensure that they have the information they need to determine whether the member for Ottawa South, or the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro—Medonte, or anyone else is doing a good job.

**Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Ottawa South talked about the importance of measurables. We have a $7.2-billion slush fund. I do not see anywhere in the budget where that will be measurable, because I do not believe it is designated for anything. The other part is the carbon tax. Let us measure its cost in terms of its benefit for a family. I do not think we see that. Would both of those be measurable if we had the numbers?

**Mr. Alexander Nuttall:** Mr. Speaker, I want to address both of those separately. In terms of the $7-billion slush fund, there cannot be measurables in place for something that has not been allocated to where it is going to be spent. That is a major issue in and of itself. I hope that over the coming year we will see what is going to happen there from the Treasury Board, and that for any dollars that are eventually designated there will be measurables put in place for whatever programming or investment they are put into. I do not think the fund should exist at all.

Second, on the carbon tax, I actually think the government has determined and measured what the effects of a carbon tax will be on the Canadian economy and on the different splices of Canadians, those who are perhaps hurting a little financially, versus the middle class, versus those with a lot of money. At the end of the day, what we have seen is that the government has not been willing to allow the opposition to have all the data. Therefore, the citizens do not have all the data.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Joliette.

I want to start by talking about four major policies that have come out from discussions over the last week to 10 days. First and foremost, I want to express how much I believe and have confidence in our trade negotiators. Our trade negotiators are the very best in the world. I appreciate and value the fine work they do, and I am very pleased with the way Canadians have come together and recognized how important that trade file is. We often hear it with regard to the Team Canada approach in dealing with the North American Free Trade Agreement.

I want to recognize how important that particular policy is to our government, and to assure members and those who are watching or tuning in on the issue of trade that we have the very best civil servants addressing this issue, and we have a Prime Minister who is right on, in terms of the positions we have taken and the posturing that is absolutely important to support a healthy trade agreement that is ultimately in Canada's best interests.

Another major issue that came up in the last seven days is the Trans Mountain pipeline. I felt very good the day I found out that the government was stepping in to acquire the pipeline. That is what the government needed to do. It is interesting that, for so long, the Conservatives were criticizing us because we were not doing enough. When it came time to get ourselves into a position to acquire, we did just that. Not only were there fantastic consultations on the project, but the science is there to support it, and we are talking about thousands of jobs and about the economy. There are so many benefits, and that is why that project is in the best national interest.

I am discouraged to see the official opposition take the position that it has in regard to the cost factor. There is a time when the government needs to get involved. It was the Harper government that got involved and spent more than that on the automobile bailout. If we had not participated in that, who knows what would have happened to the automobile industry in Canada?

This is something that was absolutely critical, and I am very proud of the government for taking the actions that it has, whether it be the Prime Minister or the Minister of Natural Resources. We will see the dividends into the future, whether it be the thousands of jobs, the care of our environment, or the ongoing consultations with indigenous people and other stakeholders.

Another major announcement was about the rail line going to Churchill. This will have a profound impact in the province of Manitoba, but I would argue that it is ultimately in Canada's best interest. Without that rail line, the whole viability of Churchill was being put into question. The Port of Churchill is Canada's northern port. It is very important that we do not neglect that port. For months on end, we tried to put people in a room together to get something to happen on that particular file. Last week, we saw a consortium come together, with very strong community involvement. From indigenous and non-indigenous groups to international trade and finances, it was a great group to see come together, not only for the well-being of the community of Churchill, but ultimately for the well-being of our country.

Just yesterday, we had an announcement of a $1.1-billion infrastructure agreement in the province of Manitoba.

● (2000)

A week or so ago I was out knocking on doors in Shaughnessy Park. A lot of individuals talked to me about the importance of infrastructure. They talked a lot about road conditions. I had indicated that I would bring that concern here to the floor of the House. Those residents, and in fact all residents of Winnipeg North, know that I understand and appreciate the importance of building infrastructure in the form of roads. This is something I communicate to the city, whether it is through this particular speech or in person to city representatives, as well as to provincial representatives when I get the opportunity. We have demonstrated through our infrastructure program that we want to have partnerships with municipalities and provinces to identify the priority areas that need the dollars that are so critically important in continuing to build Canada's infrastructure.

Those are some of the things that have occurred in the last seven days. I have not even talked about some of the fantastic work by the labour minister in making sure we are assisting or playing some role in encouraging an agreement with CP Rail and averting a potential strike. Again, that was very good news for many of the constituents I represent. I am thinking of the terminal in my area, but the bottom line is that we all benefit when we have better, healthier labour relations, and the government is there to encourage and promote that.

All of that was just in the past week. This is a government that believes that there is a need to be involved, get involved, and make a difference, and that has been demonstrated in the success of Canada over the last two and a half years.

When we talk about this budget and its implementation, one of the things I like right from the get-go is the indexing of the Canada child benefit program. That will ensure, once again, that more disposable income will be going to the families that need it the most in our communities. Those are real dollars.

In Winnipeg North alone, we are talking about millions of dollars going into our communities every month to support our families. Millionaire families do not need to receive this support for their families and children. We need to ensure that those children who need it the most are getting the most. That is something the government is ensuring, not only in its last budget, and that is going to happen by indexing. We also put it in our first budget, in the announcement that as a government we want to support our children in our communities, and we have seen that happening through the Canada child benefit program.

I had the opportunity to ask one of my Conservative colleagues a question. He made the statement that government does not really play a role in the creation of jobs. I disagree. The government does play a role. The example I gave the member was the Canada child benefit program. The individuals who receive it are spending and consuming the products. They are living in our communities, buying and consuming things for their children and others, whether at Giant Tiger stores or local restaurants or other small community businesses out there. I agree with members on all sides of the House when we say that small business is the backbone of our economy, and we need to support our small businesses.

One of the best ways we can support small businesses is by increasing disposable income from Canada's greatest consumers, those in the middle class and those aspiring to be a part of the middle class. By doing that, what we are really doing is allowing Canada's economy to grow. A healthy middle class, I would argue, would allow us to have a healthier economy. To me, that is what the Canada child benefit program does in a very big and tangible way.

That is why I say to my colleagues across the way that they should be supporting the program wholeheartedly.

● (2005)

If we want to take a look at how this government is supporting Canada's middle class, we could go back to the very first budget. Members will recall when we had the special tax break for Canada's middle class.

Have I already run out of time, or am I getting close to running out of time? I have run out of time.

● (2010)

**The Speaker:** I apologize to the hon. parliamentary secretary for not giving him a good warning of that.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my friend across the way about the way this budget has approached the issue of parental leave.

Right now, the way parental leave operates is that parents get to decide how they divide leave between them. This budget wants to change that approach so that in order to get the full allotted amount of parental leave, each parent would have to take some of that time. It essentially tries to micromanage and direct families to how it wants them to divide up child care, and it does so in the so-called name of reducing inequalities in the division of child care responsibilities.

However, many parents have concerns about the government intervening in this way. Certainly a single parent or one parent who might not be able to take parental leave as a result of the position they have would be negatively affected by the government's wish to control the direction of that parental leave. This seems very much out of touch with young families who want to be able to make these choices themselves.

Does the member not think that a better approach is to leave these decisions on which parent takes the parental leave up to the families themselves?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, to be completely honest, I am not familiar with the specifics the member is asking about. Rather than trying to bluff a way through it, I would rather continue to focus on what I believe complements all parents of children. Through the Canada child benefit program, where there is a high need, there is a higher percentage of support coming from the government. I would encourage members to look into their ridings and find out the degree of support they are receiving every month. That is the nice thing about it. Since it is universal, every riding in every region is receiving money, in my case literally millions. I think it is close to about $9 million a month going into the riding. That is helping the parents.

I will have to look into the other issue the member raised, and maybe he and I can talk on the side in regard to it. I just do not know the details or how I could better respond to his question.

**Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia, there were protest rallies held in both Cranbrook and Nelson against the $4.5 billion going to the pipeline. When I talk to people in my constituency, they tell me they would prefer to see $4.5 billion going to actually implement universal pharmacare, not just talk about it; provide a national $15-a-day day care subsidy across Canada; provide true wage equity for women across the country, and get serious about equality for women; provide clean drinking water for first nations reserves; properly pay our public servants and get the Phoenix pay system on track; provide more money for seniors and more money to rural infrastructure, and not into a Canada infrastructure bank, which because of the minimums then takes all the money away from small rural communities like mine.

Would the member not agree that there were lots of better ways to use $4.5 billion than buying a 65-year-old pipeline?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely not. I think the member is so wrong on so many accounts. I wish I had a half hour in which I could explain it thoroughly to the member. Let us realize that it is in Canada's national best interest.

What is clear is that the NDP does not support any pipeline; that is very clear. It does not realize the billions of dollars of potential revenue that come in annually and ultimately support wonderful social programs. For example, Manitoba receives billions every year to support its infrastructure, things such as health care and so forth. Without those dollars, we would not be able to provide the type of services we do.

There is so much potential. This is something that is in the national best interest. What this debate really demonstrates is that the NDP—and it should be honest with Canadians—does not support any pipelines. If it cannot support this one, it does not support any, and that is a shame, because the NDP is not being truthful about the impact of the billions and billions of dollars that would be lost.

Where would the NDP get that money?

● (2015)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, GPQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons for sharing his time with me and giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Groupe parlementaire québécois.

Unfortunatley, Bill C-74 is another mammoth bill that is being debated under another time allocation motion.

The government is blaming the opposition for opposing this bill, claiming that that is what forced it to use time allocation. However, blaming the opposition for doing its job as the opposition is like blaming the Canada Revenue Agency for collecting taxes from people or blaming meteorologists for forecasting rain.

Of course we oppose bad policies. Would the government have me believe that it did not expect us to ask questions and that it did not fully expect us to oppose certain aspects of this bill?

This is ridiculous. Here we are with only 10 minutes to discuss an immense omnibus bill that is 560 pages long.

I will therefore try to be as brief as possible and get right to the point: this budget does not address the needs of Quebeckers; it is as simple as that.

As I said at second reading, there is not much for Quebeckers in this budget, apart from a handful of minor measures that will give the minister a chance to strut all over Canada just before the election. Targeted announcements pay off in swing ridings during elections, as we know. We are seeing that right now in the Chicoutimi byelection. Journalist David Akin said that in his entire career, he had never seen so much money and so many announcements being lavished on a single riding.

They are desperate to win this byelection at any cost. They have some nerve. Our Liberal colleagues are lucky that they do not have to pay for their own gas. Otherwise, they would think twice before taking a limousine hundreds of kilometres to make a $10,000 announcement.

In Bill C-74, we see a $75-million gift to the Irvings to fight the spruce budworm. This is a perfect example. The spruce budworm is also a problem in Quebec. In fact, the infested area in Quebec is bigger than the entire province of New Brunswick, yet Quebec is not getting a single cent. Every penny is going to help the Irvings. That sums this budget up perfectly. This is not a budget for Quebec. It is, first and foremost, a budget for the Liberal Party. It is clear that this old party will never change.

Do not get me wrong, it is not all negative. For example, the Canada workers benefit is interesting. It will help out low-income workers. The small business tax cut from 10.5% to 9% is another good measure.

As hon. members know, Quebec's economy relies heavily on small business owners. Quebec is known for its creativity. With our good ideas we are able to develop businesses that can penetrate markets all around the world. Lowering the small business tax rate will give our businesses the boost they need to create our flagships of tomorrow.

However, the context in which this was announced raised some eyebrows. The Minister of Finance was criticized from all sides for the tax reform he announced last summer. Then out of nowhere he announced the tax cut in order to save face for the government, but at the end of the day it is still a good measure and the tax reform was largely abandoned.

The government kept the proposal to restrict the use of passive income, but it diluted the proposal so much that the reform will not do much. Instead of going after our farmers and small businesses, the government could have gone after the massive problems with its tax reform. I should also mention that there is nothing in the budget to address tax havens.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, we lose at least $9 billion a year in revenue to tax havens.

It is not complicated. If we recovered just a fraction of this amount, we would have some serious breathing room to balance our budget. Bay Street would obviously be angry, which would not fly with the current government, but it would be fair to the people and businesses here that pay their taxes.

The government should be closing loopholes instead of creating more tax havens by signing information sharing agreements with countries that do not have tax return obligations.

Once again, Quebec is demanding that it be able to collect all taxes, but the Prime Minister thumbed his nose at Quebec's unanimous motion, showing his arrogance yet again.

I do not think that any party in power in Quebec would turn its nose up at billions of dollars hidden in tax havens, unlike the Liberals, who are creating more loopholes. The same goes for Netflix, an American multinational corporation.

● (2020)

Quebec and Canadian companies that provide a similar service must charge sales tax, but the government is doing everything it can to exempt Netflix and other U.S. giants from this requirement. That is completely unfair. It is offering a competitive advantage to foreign businesses to the detriment of our own. That must change.

Speaking of handouts to foreign businesses, let us talk about the environment and Trans Mountain. The government just gave a $4.5 billion gift to a U.S. company to develop a pipeline that British Columbia opposes.

The 2015 Liberal platform had this to say about environmental projects:

> Canadians must be able to trust that government...will respect the rights of those most affected [by these resource-based projects]...While governments grant permits for resource development, only communities can grant permission.

The government just reversed its position. This budget is more of the same on the environment: a lot of talk and not too many concrete measures. It is simply disappointing.

Quebec is asking for help with the electrification of transportation, but there is nothing for that in the budget. This corner of the House has asked for this funding several times.

Time is running out so I will start to wrap up. This budget is above all for Liberals. It sprinkles around some tax breaks in order to win elections. The government still has not resolved the problem of health transfers that are below the acceptable minimum threshold. While the Liberal Party is playing Monopoly with our money, Quebec is confronted with real problems every year because of a significant increase in health care costs.

I would like the government to start listening instead of always being so arrogant, as we saw with the single tax return and the migrant crisis. On our side, we are going to continue tirelessly defending the interests of our people, Quebeckers.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I had the privilege of joining my colleague from Joliette and going to the Atikamekw of Manawan First Nation. We could see that there are desperate needs on this territory. Together with Chief Jean-Roch Ottawa and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, we embarked on a day-long tour of the community. We saw that there are some serious needs and we were able to make a small announcement and start helping.

Can my colleague talk about this issue and what we can do in budget 2017-18 and what work we can do in general to improve things in these regions and these communities?

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. It is good to use concrete examples and to apply them in a budgetary context.

I thank my colleague from Laurentides—Labelle as well as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services for their visit in my riding yesterday to see the community of Manawan. It was an opportunity for us to cut the ribbon on some lovely new housing for the Atikamekw of Manawan First Nation. There was a good financial contribution from the federal government for these housing units. I welcome this good news.

At the same time, my colleagues were able to see all the needs. The crown has committed to providing the same service level to indigenous communities across the country as is provided to other Canadians. We were able to see that it is not the case. There are still huge housing needs. The timing is good since, in previous budgets, important announcements were made regarding indigenous infrastructure. The money has barely been spent if at all. We must therefore make sure that amounts which were announced for infrastructure are indeed allocated, in order to improve indigenous peoples' quality of life in Canada.

● (2025)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question about pipelines.

Of course we do not agree with the government's decision to buy a pipeline, but at the same time, Quebec imports foreign oil from countries such as Saudi Arabia and it is more expensive than Canadian oil.

Would my colleague agree with the general principle that it would be best if Quebec was using Canadian oil? Does he think it is a good idea?

**Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I would like to correct one thing. Quebec does not import oil from Saudi Arabia. Our imports vary each year, but come primarily from the United States as well as England and Norway, as far as I know. We have also imported a great deal of oil from the west since the reversal of Enbridge pipeline 9B. That is the situation.

Like the Conservatives, we condemn the purchase by the federal government with public money of Trans Mountain and the Enbridge line. We believe that it is a bad decision. That is all we agree on, however. We are more supportive of a greener economy and decisions that lessen our dependence on fossil fuels. With respect to the international community, we support the COP21 Paris Agreement. According to our analysis, which is consistent with scientific studies, in order to comply with this agreement we must stop all new development of the oil sands, which, I would remind members, is extremely polluting. Furthermore, new pipelines are used not just to move existing oil at a good price, but also to extract more. This will prevent us from honouring the commitments we made in Paris.

We prefer to develop other energy sources and to start by reducing energy consumption in the 21st century. This works out well because Quebec has everything it needs to develop its renewable energy and is a world leader in the area. Economic development choices, however, are more focused on the oil sands than on the economy of the future. For that reason we rise in the House to defend the environment.

[*English*]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak tonight to the budget implementation act and in general to the budget policy of the government.

I thought what I would do tonight is speak to some of the specific debate we are having around budget measures and the fiscal policies of the government. At the same time, I will set that in a sort of philosophical context. I will talk a bit about what a Conservative vision of economic policy is and what the fixed principles and values of that approach is rooted in. I will then work that into some of the particulars of the policy debate we are having tonight.

A discussion of economic policy has to start with a commitment to justice. After all, it is not purely a discussion when we talk about budgets but rather what is just with respect to government policy. By just, I mean what is due. Justice is the virtue of doing that which is due to others and government policy should be informed by that.

There are a number of different principles and applications of justice of course, such as justice to whom. Are we talking about giving to another that which is due? I want to talk about some of those particulars as I work through my speech.

One of the issues we speak about often in the context of justice is the question of intergenerational justice; that is how we as the present generation gives that which is due to the next generation. This is a fundamental question of justice. We can choose to enjoy as much as possible for ourselves the goods of our society and leave as little as possible for the next generation or we can govern ourselves with an eye to preserve as much as possible for the next generation to give them the same or a better life, a better set of opportunities. That is a question of intergenerational justice, one that is fundamental.

Maybe another way of thinking about that is sustainability. Is our fiscal environment, our institutions or other aspects of our society sustainable in the sense that we are preserving them and setting them up so they are passed on in a similar or better condition to the next generation?

Conservatives, in thinking about the issue of intergenerational justice, will often reflect on the work of a great English philosopher and parliamentarian, Edmund Burke. He talked about the fragility of society, how we received society from our ancestors, and we ought to preserve it with prudence and with caution as we pass it on to the next generation.

This is why Conservatives who follow Edmund Burke are instinctively skeptical of extreme proposals for revolution. Sometimes we perceive proposals from Liberals and New Democrats as saying that we should radically reorder and change the way we do things. Conservatives are often a voice of caution in those situations, saying that while we support change, we want to ensure we are always preserve the benefits of society that we received from our ancestors and that we pass them on to the next generation, again out of a concern for fundamental justice. We preserve traditions and we are prudent in recognizing what we owe to the future.

It is my sincere belief that the present approach to budgeting is a great betrayal of that principle of intergenerational justice. The rhetoric from the government is that we have to spend and invest, but we have to spend now and we have to spend far more than we are taking in.

The inevitable consequence of spending more than we have today is that subsequent generations will have to pay more in tax to pay the interest on the expenditures that we enjoy now, and not even to pay off our present expenditures. I do not understand how anyone could get out of the fairly simple logic of that argument.

If we spend money today, it has to be paid off at some point in the future. The government will come back at this argument in various ways. For instance, It will say that these expenditures are actually stimulative, that deficit spending creates economic growth which then benefits everybody else in the long term.

● (2030)

The economic logic of that comes from John Maynard Keynes, who talked about stimulative spending during economic downtimes, which then has to be balanced out during good years. There has always been a recognition, even among economists who have favoured a stimulative approach to fiscal policy, that governments still have to pay that off at certain times. Maybe the argument goes that a government runs deficits during bad years and then it pays it off during good years. However, the idea of running deficits constantly is not a recognizable economic theory that has been advanced by serious economic thinkers.

Eventually, a government does have to pay it off, and eventually the next generation or the one after it will have to pay the price for the excesses of the present. It is bad economics to think a government can run perpetual deficits, but it is also a violation of the great principle of intergenerational justice.

I think Canadians get this intuitively, by the way, because in the last election, the Prime Minister was able to sell to 39% of Canadians a deficit spending proposal, albeit a very limited one. He said that his government would run deficits for three years, deficits that would not exceed $10 billion, and then the government would balance the budget in the fourth year. We are coming up to that fourth year and are nowhere near a balanced budget.

The Liberals were able to sell that because Canadians thought it was a limited approach to deficit spending. After the election, the government totally betrayed the commitment it made previously. Now it does not have a plan to ever balance the budget.

I note that every province in this country that runs a deficit has a timeline for getting out of that deficit. This is the only finance minister in the country who does not have a timeline for that deficit.

This is a violation of the principle of intergenerational justice. My kids are going to have to work harder and pay more in taxes, which they will not enjoy in services back from the government, because our generation has chosen this present government that is spending more than it has. I would submit that is fundamentally unjust.

Our alternative approach, which emphasizes balanced budgets, is sustainable in the long term, and allows us to make investments in social programs that we know will be able to continue, and it ensures that whatever we do within the framework of a balanced budget, we will be able to sustain and provide a continuing level of opportunity in social programs to the next generation.

In every case, in Canada and elsewhere, when a government has persistent deficit spending, eventually the party ends. Eventually, someone in the future has to do the hard work of cutting back, and has to endure the loss of services and increase in taxes associated with an inevitable reckoning. I would submit that it is not just, right, or moral to ask my kids and other kids to pay for what we are not willing to pay for in the present.

In pursuit of an economic policy that is just, we seek intergenerational justice, respect for the next generation, and sustainable fiscal policies that do not involve perpetual deficits.

There is another argument that the government often brings up in this case. It talks about the debt-to-GDP ratio and says that it is maintaining that ratio relatively consistently over time.

First of all, Canadians should be concerned about the overall debt-to-GDP ratio because, although our federal debt-to-GDP ratio is relatively lower than many other countries', our total government debt-to-GDP ratio is comparable to those countries'. Since far more services are provided in this country at a sub-national level than in most other countries, as we are more decentralized as a federation than many of our partners, it is important to compare apples to apples when talking about the debt-to-GDP ratio and look at total government debt-to-GDP in Canada as compared to other countries. Unfortunately, in that comparison, Canada is certainly right there in the rest of the pack in terms of this challenge.

The other thing I would say about the debt-to-GDP ratio is that it is a measure of the debt that we could plausibly carry. However, it does not change the fact that the debt still has to be paid off. With a higher GDP, a government can carry more debt, but it still has to pay it off and it still has to pay interest on it in the meantime, and that is still an injustice to the next generation.

● (2035)

Our party believes that we need a sustainable fiscal policy, one that does include, and I am sure this will come up in questions, running deficits during periods of major economic downturns, or periods of national crisis and disaster. That is precisely what we did. However, at the same time, we had a long-term sustainable fiscal policy that was stimulative for those periods and paid off debt outside of those periods. The government seems to believe that debt and deficits should be run in perpetuity, and that is certainly a policy that we very strongly disagree with.

Another element of justice in the context of the budget is justice for taxpayers. Taxpayers who work hard and have to pay part of their hard-earned income to the government have certain legitimate expectations about the spirit in which their money should be spent. They have an expectation that it will be spent on things that are in the public interest and that relate to their interests, not their own personal immediate interests necessarily, but that are reflective of the interests of the population as a whole, such that taxation is more than just a means of well-connected insiders accessing the public largesse. That is the ideal, that taxes be collected with the public interest goal in mind.

Unfortunately, we see so many elements of spending in this budget and other government budget documents that are really disconnected from any rational calculation of the public interest. Rather, they are clearly reflective of the fact that the government wants to use public dollars to reward well-connected insiders, to reward their friends, and establish relationships they perceive to be in their interest.

I will give one example of this. It is something that clearly and obviously goes against the principle of justice for taxpayers. It is something called the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Hundreds of millions of Canadian taxpayer dollars are going to fund a bank that builds infrastructure in Asia, headquartered in Beijing, and controlled by the Chinese government as an instrument of its foreign policy. We are putting up hundreds of millions of dollars for Canada to be a voting member of this organization, but in reality to control something around less than one per cent of the shares.

In any event, we are talking about hundreds of millions of dollars being put into this infrastructure bank, and the only argument the government can come up with for giving money overseas to this instrument of Chinese foreign policy is that it will create opportunities for Canadian companies to be able to get contracts through this bank. Allegedly Canadian participation in the infrastructure bank means that Canadians companies could now join in projects they would not have been able to join before.

However, that is not true. I have visited the headquarters of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in Beijing and officials told us that they have a totally open staffing and procurement policy, which means that Canadian companies could participate in these contracts and would have an equal opportunity to bid on these projects in any event. The only justification the government has for this is simply not correct.

The government in Beijing obviously wants other countries to put their money into this as a tool of their foreign policy, and it is maybe a way of getting a nice pat on the back from someone for doing it, but this is a case of grievous injustice to taxpayers who would rather see their money spent at home on things that are reflective of their understanding of the Canadian public interest, of the common good here rather than advancing the PRC's foreign policy goals.

There are many aspects of this. There is corporate welfare through programs like the supercluster program. How is it just for taxpayers that small business owners and the middle class and those working hard to join it have to pay taxes to the government, which are then used to subsidize already very successful, well-connected businesses? That is fundamentally unjust to those less well-connected taxpayers.

● (2040)

Taxes are not supposed to be a reward for rent seekers. They are not supposed to be a reward for those who invest in having close relationships with those in power in order to realize some benefit from them, or what economists would call rent seekers. Taxes are supposed to advance the public interest. Unfortunately, in this government, there are many examples of the Liberals using money in an ineffective way that really rewards their friends instead of being connected to the public interest.

Other elements of justice that should inform a rational and effective fiscal policy is that include a concern for social equality expressed through equality of opportunity and policies that encourage self-reliance. Our view is that the best way to ensure justice for all and equality of opportunity is to cut the taxes of those who need those tax cuts the most. If we look at the record of the previous Conservative government and the taxes we cut, tax relief was always targeted to those who were struggling, those who needed that tax relief the most.

I hear a member laughing over there. I invite her to ask a question in questions and comments and identify a tax that we cut that benefited primarily or exclusively the wealthy. I do not think I will hear that question, because there were none. The tax cuts by the previous government included cutting the GST and the lowest marginal rate of the small business tax rate. Yes, we cut the business tax rate, and that benefits all Canadians. Our approach was not to exercise corporate welfare but rather to cut taxes for businesses that would encourage economic growth, and thereby benefit the employees and customers. We did not impose punitive taxes on Canadians like the current government is doing, for example, with its carbon tax.

We have challenged the Liberals on the issue of the carbon tax from multiple angles. Of course, there is the fact that they will not even give us the information about how much the carbon tax is going to impact the average Canadian. However, I want to talk specifically about it in terms of justice and social equality.

The thing with the carbon tax is that it is designed to create an incentive for people to change their behaviour. It is a punitive approach to creating that incentive. It says to people that if they do not change their behaviour, they will have to pay a higher tax. There are some people who might be able to afford the investment of changing their behaviour. Yes, they can afford to retrofit their home. They can afford to move closer to the city. However, the problem is that there are also many Canadians who cannot respond to that punitive approach, because they simply cannot afford to make those kinds of behavioural changes. There could be an alternative way of helping people who I think want to do their part for the environment, but who cannot respond to the stick. They might respond better to a carrot. In any event, they cannot respond to the punitive approach of a carbon tax.

A carbon tax would tax home heating fuel, and gas for those who cannot necessarily afford electric hybrid cars. The carbon tax really is a tax that hits those who can least afford to pay it.

There is an alternative approach when it comes to the environment. One only has to look at the previous government's environmental record. It was to be the first government in Canadian history under which emissions went down, or up by less in every single province compared to the previous government. To members who are laughing and shaking their heads, I look forward to their questions, because if you look at the numbers, it is very clear that that is the real record on the environment of the previous government.

How did we achieve those reductions? We had binding sector-by-sector regulations and we gave Canadians incentives that involved rewards. We gave things like a home retrofit tax credit, instead of punishing people for not making certain environmental decisions. We gave them a tax credit, which gave them the means to make investments they probably would want to make anyway, such as making their homes more energy efficient. We moved forward with things like the transit tax credit, which the current government, in fact, got rid of.

● (2045)

It is clear that there are two different visions of the economy, and ours, on many scores, is a more just approach to the economy. That is why we propose it as an alternative to the government's budget.

**The Speaker:** Before I go on to questions and comments, I want to remind the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan to address his comments to the Chair. If he says, "your questions", the only time, of course, the Speaker has questions is when he is putting a question to the House for a vote, obviously.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Ottawa South.

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take my colleague to task for some of the revisionist history he has put forward here this evening. Canadians should pay close attention to some of the wording he has put forward. He has been careful to construct a theory about Conservative spending, Conservative legacies, and an approach to the economy that he talks about in terms of intergenerational justice.

Let us talk about intergenerational justice. Let us remind the member opposite that when the previous Liberal government achieved power in 1993, it inherited a massive annual deficit and a massive national debt. It took us two or three years to turn it around before delivering five successive surpluses and paying down tens of billions of dollars of national debt.

Cutting the previous government some slack, given the 2008 economic slowdown, which, by the way, accounted for so much of the decline in greenhouse gases, not any turning-the-corner plan the member was not here to defend, let us just look at Mr. Harper's Conservative approach to debt and deficits. He inherited a $13-billion surplus when he came to power. He ran a deficit every single year as Prime Minister of Canada and perhaps balanced the books in the last year by slashing spending. By the way, it is reminiscent of the old nightmare we have seen, from Reagan to Harris to Harper, and soon, to Trump: they borrow money, they slash taxes, they drive up the national debt, and they leave lingering deficits.

● (2050)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I know the member was eager to bring Trump into this debate somehow, but I would encourage him to put aside the election talking points and actually engage in the discussion. I never said that one should not ever run deficits. I said specifically, in fact, that during times of national crisis, of major economic downturns, it is perfectly sensible to run stimulative deficits.

Let us be clear. What the member said about running deficits every single year under Stephen Harper is objectively false. I have never heard Liberal members even claim that in the early years, prior to the economic downturn, there was a deficit. Surely the member is mistaken in thinking that in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 fiscal years there were deficits. That was obviously not the case. At the end, again, the Parliamentary Budget Officer was clear that the budget was balanced. Debt was paid down prior to the financial crisis, and always during the financial crisis it was his party that was asking for more to be spent.

Let us talk as well, because the member did, about the Liberal policies of the 1990s. The Liberal policies of the 1990s were clearly an example of what happens when they have big deficits that have been run and they reach a point where they just cannot keep digging anymore. The pressure from the IMF on Canada and from other institutions forced a situation where there had to be a fiscal reckoning, and it was a painful fiscal reckoning. The government balanced budgets not by finding efficiencies at the federal level but by slashing transfers to the provinces. That is not how the previous Conservative government balanced the budget. We did not slash transfers to the provinces. Rather, we found efficiencies within the delivery of services federally and did so quite effectively, and we were able to deliver a balanced budget on schedule. We did that, again, without the massive slashing to provincial transfers.

The member, when he talks, should think about the lessons of the 1990s, because—

**The Speaker:** Order. I was trying to get the member's attention.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth.

**Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was quite taken with the fact that the member opposite decided to talk about the environmental record of the Conservative government. I was quite taken, because he referred to emissions dropping. I am wondering to what extent he would actually credit the Ontario government, which at that same time moved away from coal-fired plants, which was a tremendous change to our environment. I remember looking out my office window when I was working downtown and seeing smog from my window. It was a yellow smudge across the sky. We do not have smog days anymore. There was a huge change to our environmental standards because of the work of our Ontario government. We need to take that into account.

In addition, the transit tax credit was a non-refundable tax credit, so lower-income individuals could not use it or benefit from it. What we are doing is putting money into transit systems as a whole. Forty years ago, we would get onto the TTC in Toronto, and there was no air-conditioning during the summer. Now we are actually doing maintenance and making it a usable system.

How does the member not attribute and credit what has been done in Ontario with getting rid of the coal-fired plants, and in addition, what our government is doing now to improve public transit? How does that compare to a non-refundable tax credit that was not being used?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, Ontario provincial Liberal candidates will be gratified that someone is still trying to defend them after Kathleen Wynne has already thrown in the towel. We will find out on Thursday what people think about the record of Ontario's provincial government. It is going to be a revealing vote on the approach the Liberals take when they are in power.

If we look at the federation as a whole and the record of the previous Conservative government on the environment, in every single provincial jurisdiction, emissions either went down during the period of the Harper government or they went up by less than they had under the previous government. Emissions reductions, relative to the previous period, were achieved in every single jurisdiction. The member can check that.

Obviously, it is hard to abstract out what exactly was the result of which level of government and initiatives of different sorts, some of which were helpful, some of which were not. We are not doing policy experiments in a petri dish. However, if we look at the fact that positive results were achieved in every single jurisdiction, that seems to suggest that it had something to do with the actions of the federal government.

In terms of the issue of transit, many low-income Canadians still pay some tax and, therefore, benefit from the tax credits that were in place in terms of transit. There was spending on transit systems as well under the previous government here in Canada, unlike the current government, which is spending money on infrastructure overseas but has been behind on infrastructure investments here in Canada. We are very proud of our record.

● (2055)

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fact that greenhouse gas emissions went down in all jurisdictions, as he claims, might have something to do with the state of the economy. We had a downturn in the economy during the financial crisis in 2008. It might have had something to do with that. Over 10 years, the Conservatives had the worst economic performance since the Second World War, the worst growth in exports, the worst job creation, and the worst GDP growth since Mackenzie King. That was perhaps their plan to fight climate change. That is why, in 2015, we wondered if we were heading into another recession.

I would like to hear the member's comments about something specific he touched on during his speech, which was intergenerational injustice. Does he see that there can be injustice between generations when one generation is not a good steward of its environment? Does he feel that this can also constitute intergenerational injustice? How does he assess the Harper record on that front, and what is the Conservative plan to actually do something on climate change?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, in terms of the final question, I absolutely agree with the member on the principle that the question of intergenerational justice is very much relevant to our discussions about how we manage the environment and the quality of the environment we pass on to the next generation. I just disagree with the government's belief that the best way to improve the environment is for the government to impose punitive taxes and raise revenue, because I am actually concerned about the environment, not about increasing the size of the revenue stream for government.

Liberals do not want to credit the previous government for actual progress that was achieved on the environment, so they say that it was either because of Ontario or because of the global financial crisis. Let us be clear that global emissions went up during that period. Canadian emissions went down, and Canada, though affected by the global recession, was relatively less impacted by the global recession than many other countries. It stretches logic for the government to say that environmental progress was a result of the environmental downturn. The fact that global emissions went up while ours went down and that we were less affected by the recession than others does not really fit.

The member talks about our economic performance as if, in one breath, on the environment, he wants us to remember that there was a recession, and then in the next breath, he wants us to forget it. Canada's relative performance during this period was by far the best in the G7. It had the best job-creation record.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, It is a pleasure tonight to speak to budget 2018, where we continue our efforts to invest in the Canadian economy with a view to having the whole population benefit. Our approach is not only aimed at the growth of the Canadian economy. It is mostly focused on people because our goal is to directly support Canadians across the country.

I am proud to be able to continue looking to the future, be it for advancement, growth or progress. I am particularly happy with the measures against gender-based discrimination. It is high time that we make equality a reality.

Budget 2018 shows that we are stronger together. Through vital measures, the government encourages the Canadian population at every stage of life.

Let us start with the Canada child benefit, which is beneficial to those who need it most: our youth. Through this allocation, we reduce poverty among children. We allow them to live a carefree childhood. Indeed, the Canada child benefit gives parents more money to pay for activities, winter clothing and school material or to save for the future. In Alfred-Pellan, this benefit translates into $5.6 million tax-free being paid each month to the families of more than 18,400 children.

I had the opportunity to meet Mathilde, a single mother from Laval. She told me about her financial difficulties and the dilemmas she has to face. Mathilde confirmed to me that the $600 benefit she gets will allow her to register her son in swimming lessons and day camp during the summer. For Mathilde, this benefit is valuable. She gives her son an unforgettable childhood.

In order to make sure that the Canada child benefit continues to be valuable in the long term, we will start indexing it next month. This way, its value will continue increasing each year. It is not just Mathilde and her son we are helping, but thousands of children and families all over Canada.

The benefit does not just help families in Alfred-Pellan. It will also help local businesses and organizations. This benefit helps everyone. The families reinvest in their communities, and these communities gladly continue to prosper.

Once these children grow up, we continue to help them realize their full potential. We must encourage young people to gain the skills and knowledge required to get jobs. Canada summer jobs is there to help in this process. Our government is allocating $448.5 million over five years to improve the youth employment strategy.

Last year, more than 175 youth in my riding of Alfred-Pellan used this opportunity to develop new skills. This year, nearly 220 youth will participate in the Canada summer jobs program.

● (2100)

This program provides great opportunities for young people across Canada, and I hope it will continue to grow and enrich our younger generations.

Then comes the time to join the labour force. Even now, the government is continuing to encourage Canadians. This year, women are the focus. Consider this: how can we move forward if half of us are being held back? For that reason, I applaud this budget, which makes Canadian women and girls a main focus. They make a difference. They change Canada. They deserve a place, so our government is supporting them by injecting $3 million over five years to ensure pay transparency, $100 million over five years to improve the women's program, and $19.9 million over five years to help women enter and succeed in the workforce.

We are supporting current and future women entrepreneurs through our new women's entrepreneurship strategy. We are creating new funding for their business projects and offering them expanded services and more opportunities for growth. In that way, our government is supporting the creativity of Canadian women by giving them the tools they need to overcome all of the challenges of entrepreneurship. At the same time, we are continuing our efforts aimed at advancing women business leaders.

I am pleased to see new business ventures flourishing in Alfred-Pellan, women-led businesses that are strengthening our local economy and our communities. For instance, I met a woman from Laval named Sophie who is currently developing her project. She underscored the difficulties she is coming up against as a young female entrepreneur in the automobile sector. Sophie wants to own a car dealership. Today I can confirm to Sophie that our government has allocated $105 million to development agencies to help support her and other female entrepreneurs. This should guarantee her access to valuable resources to help her and her business succeed.

Now I want to talk about the Canada workers benefit, which is also benefiting those who most need it, that is, our low-income workers. For many Canadians, the end of the month is a serious source of anguish and stress, and sometimes they have to do without in order to make ends meet. That is why our government introduced the Canada workers benefit. This more generous benefit is supporting workers, who can therefore keep more of their pay cheque, and it is helping people who are looking for work by providing them with more assistance to enter and remain in the workforce.

In my riding of Alfred-Pellan, I met Sébastien, a low-income worker. He complained that financial difficulties are keeping him from being able to meet the needs of his two children, aged five and eight. Thanks to the Canada workers benefit, I can confirm to Sébastien that he will be one of the 300,000 low-income workers who will receive this assistance. This way, he and his family will no longer have to worry at the end of tough months.

We are not just enhancing the generosity of this benefit, we are also enhancing its accessibility. No more filing claims. No more paperwork. No more waiting. Every eligible worker will receive this benefit automatically once they submit their tax return. This will keep more people out of poverty, since many people do not claim the benefit.

● (2105)

I will close by saying that budget 2018 builds on our plan. It enables our government to continue investing in Canadians, for Canadians.

Our constituents are our inspiration for moving forward and paving the way to a stronger, more generous, and more prosperous Canada. We are going to continue to add to this plan, which is working and was designed for the people. I am proud to be able to work with the people of Alfred-Pellan and Laval and with municipal and provincial elected officials.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** I would like to ask the member a question. Is he sharing his time with the member for Winnipeg Centre?

● (2110)

**Mr. Angelo Iacono:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** Thank you, I wanted to make sure.

**Mr. Ramez Ayoub (Thérèse-De Blainville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would have liked my colleague from Alfred-Pellan to tell us a bit more about the impact of this last budget on single mothers. He abundantly talked about women, but single mothers have specific needs, and we must take care of their families, since many of them are in need.

I would like the member for Alfred-Pellan to tell us a bit more about his vision of this budget.

**Mr. Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Equality in the workforce is an important issue for me. When we invest in women, we reinforce our community and our economy. That is why I welcome the measures included in budget 2018 to close the gender wage gap and to support women in the workforce. Among other things, we are investing $7 billion to address the needs in early learning and child care as well as enhancing maternity and parental benefits.

We know there is still much work to do, but we continue to advance gender equality in Canada. We continue helping single mothers by enhancing the Canada child benefit. That way, we provide them with more support. Last year, single mothers earning less than $60,000 received on average $9,000 in benefits. We will keep helping them.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague from Alfred-Pellan. I wish to thank him for his speech.

I am really disappointed that, besides carbon pricing, Bill C-74 does not contain any concrete measures to eliminate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, in the 2005 budget, which was a Liberal budget, there were several measures to combat greenhouse gases and, in particular, to improve energy efficiency. For example, I am thinking of the ecoENERGY program, which helped Canadians take steps to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

In his opinion, has there been some regression on the part of this government, which is doing nothing for energy efficiency in this budget?

**Mr. Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for her question.

As a Canadian, I have a great appreciation for the richness of our environment and the beauty of our landscape. I am not the only one. That is why our government adopted the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. That is also why we introduced a carbon tax.

We will be implementing more than just the measures in budget 2018. We will continue to make commitments to protect Canada's nature, parks, and wildlife. We will continue our efforts to protect our oceans with the national oceans protection plan. Our government is determined to create a real legacy for our children and future generations.

**Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to listen to the speech of my colleague from Alfred-Pellan, which is not very far from my riding. I listened very carefully to what he had to say.

Over the past two years, we have created over 600,000 jobs. I would like to know whether my colleague believes that the Canada child benefit has contributed to economic growth. What effect has this job creation had?

**Mr. Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague whose riding is indeed quite close to mine.

Our government presented a budget that builds on last year's budget. Whether we are talking about children, adults, or seniors, our measures are always designed to help Canadians at every stage of life. First, we ensure that young people can make the most of their childhoods through the Canada child benefit. Then, we ensure that those who work hard every day have equal opportunities and good, better-paying jobs. Finally, we ensure that our seniors can enjoy a peaceful retirement.

People have been and always will be our primary concern.

● (2115)

**Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.):**

[*Member spoke in aboriginal language*]

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be here this evening.

[*English*]

I would like to highlight some of the benefits to the Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 territories that make up Manitoba. We are all treaty people and we all work together.

The benefits that come to Manitoba in budget 2018 are numerous. The major transfers will total $4 billion in 2018-19, an increase of $289.6 million from the previous year. There will be $2 billion through equalization, an increase of $216.5 million from the previous year; $1.4 billion through the Canada health transfer, an increase of $56.5 million from the previous year; and $518 million through the Canada social transfer, an increase of $16.6 million from the previous year. This is incredible news for the people of Manitoba.

Just in Winnipeg itself, we are supporting the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The Canadian Museum for Human Rights, one of Canada's national museums, works to explore the subject of human rights, with special but not exclusive reference to Canada, in order to enhance the public's understanding of human rights. In order to ensure that the museum has adequate funding to deliver on its mandate, including promoting respect for others and encouraging reflection and dialogue, budget 2018 provides $35 million over six years, starting in 2018-19, to support the museum's operation. The president of this museum, our national museum in Winnipeg, is excited, and so are the people of Winnipeg.

That is not the end. In budget 2018, we have the National Microbiology Laboratory. We are proposing to provide $9.4 million over five years, starting 2018-19, to establish a centre for innovation in infectious disease diagnostics at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg, funded from the Public Health Agency of Canada's existing resource levels. This is good news for scientists in our city.

We are also going to be maintaining rail service to remote communities. Budget 2018 proposes to provide funding of $11.3 million in 2018-19 to Transport Canada for the renewal of the remote passenger rail program. This money helps support two passenger rail services under the program, the Sept-Îles to Schefferville service in Quebec and Labrador and the train from The Pas to Pukatawagan in northern Manitoba. This is for the people of Churchill and the 22 indigenous communities that rely on this service. I am very proud of the things we have done for the people of Manitoba, who were left far too long without effect under the previous government.

In budget 2018, we are introducing the Canada workers benefit and we are strengthening the workers income tax benefit, the WITB, by making it more generous and making the benefits more accessible. This strengthened benefit, the Canada workers benefit, will take effect in 2019. In budget 2018, the government proposes to increase maximum benefits under the CWB by up to $170 in 2019 and increase the income level at which the benefit is phased out completely. The government also proposes to increase the maximum benefit provided through the CWB disability supplement by an additional $160. This enhancement is expected to directly benefit 68,000 Manitoba workers annually.

As someone who represents one of the poorest ridings in the country, I can say that this measure will go a long way toward supporting workers in our communities who need it most, whether they are Filipino people working in the health care field or indigenous people doing collection services with local services. As a result of recent enhancements, a low-income worker earning $15,000 a year could receive up to nearly $500 more from the program in 2019 than he or she received in 2018.

Moving forward, the government will continue to work with interested provinces, and I hope the Province of Manitoba's Conservative government is actually interested in working with us to harmonize these benefits and help support the transition from social assistance into work.

At the same time, the government recognizes that not all low-income workers are receiving the CWB, because sometimes people do not apply. The government is proposing amendments that would allow the Canada Revenue Agency to automatically determine whether these tax filers are eligible for the benefit. An estimated 300,000 additional low-income workers would receive the new CWB for the 2019 tax year as a result of these changes. Specifically, the government estimates that approximately 13,000 additional low-income Manitoba workers would receive the benefit for the 2019 tax year.

CWB enhancements, combined with new investments to make sure that every worker who qualifies actually receives the benefit, would mean the government is investing almost $1 billion of new funding for the benefit in 2019, relative to 2018. The government estimates that enhancements and improved take-up in 2019 would directly benefit more than two million working Canadians, many of whom were not benefiting from the WITB. This would help lift approximately 70,000 Canadians out of poverty. This is great work for the people of Manitoba.

● (2130)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** It being 9:22 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, March 31, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on the amendment to the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment to the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** All those in favour of the amendment to the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 6, 2018, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

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## NATIONAL SECURITY ACT, 2017

BILL C-59—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-59, An Act respecting national security matters.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

* * *

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACT

BILL C-69—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

* * *

● (2135)

## CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from May 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-75, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise tonight to provide an overview of some of the key areas of criminal justice reform our government is tackling in Bill C-75.

In broad terms, the amendments in this legislation seek to promote efficiency in the criminal justice system, reduce case completion times, and speed up trials; reduce overrepresentation of indigenous peoples and marginalized peoples in our jails; and reduce systemic barriers that for far too long have prevented victims from coming forward, telling their stories, being heard, and being believed. All of these things are wrapped in our core objectives in Bill C-75, which will ensure that we are holding offenders to account, that we are ensuring that victims have their justice, and that we are keeping Canadians safe.

Before moving into the substance of my remarks, I would like to outline the origins and context that gave rise to the bill.

Before our government took office, there were delays and injustices in our criminal justice system. The opposition Conservatives would know something about that. In fact, they contributed to those delays.

It was for this reason that at the very outset of our mandate the Prime Minister gave the mandate to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada to undertake responsive and comprehensive reforms to improve our criminal justice system to enhance access to justice.

In undertaking this bold task, the minister has been listening. She has been listening to stakeholders. She has been listening to actors who intersect with the criminal justice system every day, right across the continuum. In fact, much of the bold legislative reform is the result of consultations with her federal, provincial, and territorial counterparts and responds directly to the concerns they have voiced.

Portions of the bill also address issues that were identified by the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs in its June 27 report "Delaying Justice is Denying Justice: An Urgent Need to Address Lengthy Court Delays in Canada".

Of course, another primary impetus for these bold reforms is the Supreme Court of Canada decision in 2016 called Jordan, in which the court stressed the need for efforts by all those involved in the criminal justice system to reduce delays and increase efficiencies.

[*Translation*]

My observations today will be on five key aspects of the bill: modernization and streamlining of the bail system; improving the approach to administration of justice offences for adults and youths; restricting the use of preliminary inquiries to offences carrying a life sentence; reclassifying certain Criminal Code offences; and improving the composition of juries and the jury selection process.

[*English*]

Now let me elaborate on these five key areas.

First, the bill proposes to modernize the bail provisions of the Criminal Code, which have many outdated and unnecessarily complex or redundant provisions.

The bill would do this by consolidating the various police and judicial pre-trial forms of release currently in the code and simplifying the release processes; increasing the scope of the conditions police can impose, while providing guidance in regard to reasonable and relevant conditions to be imposed in light of the circumstances surrounding the offence and other factors, such as public safety; and imposing, consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada's 2017 decision in Antic, a "principle of restraint" so that police and judges are required to consider the least restrictive and alternative means of responding to a breach, rather than automatically detaining an accused, including limiting the use of "sureties", which are persons who supervise an accused while on bail, ensuring that the release of an accused at the earliest opportunity is favoured over detention.

Once the bill is passed, police would also be required to impose the least onerous conditions necessary if an accused is released.

[*Translation*]

The changes made to the bail system would help modernize and streamline the provisions and save time and resources. They also seek to contribute to mitigating the disproportionate repercussions to accused who are indigenous or those who belong to vulnerable populations by ensuring that courts processing the bail applications and police officers take their specific situation into account when determining whether to detain them and impose conditions and, if so, the type of conditions.

● (2130)

[*English*]

Bill C-75 also includes reforms related to intimate partner violence, or IPV, and in doing so, follows through with our government's 2015 electoral commitments. It creates a definition of "intimate partner" that would apply to the entire Criminal Code, which includes a current or former spouse, common-law partner, and dating partner. A reverse onus will be imposed at bail for repeat IPV offenders.

This responds directly to the feedback that we have received from victims at round tables across the country. It will mean that an accused, rather than the crown, will have the responsibility to show why he or she should be released pending trial. These measures are necessary to take meaningful steps in ending intimate partner violence.

Finally, the bill would require the courts to consider whether an accused would be charged with an IPV offence when determining whether to release the accused on bail. These reforms target repeat offenders who have prior convictions or have been charged with an IPV. These reforms send a signal that our government is committed to meaningful and lasting reform, which protects women by focusing on deterrence.

I will now turn to the enhanced approach with regard to administration of justice offences. Administration of justice offences are offences committed against the criminal justice system after the commission of an initial offence. The most common of these offences is a failure to comply with a set of bail conditions, for example, disobeying a curfew or a failure to appear in court when required to do so.

Often offenders who have committed an offence and are released on bail are subject to conditions that can be challenging or impossible to comply with due to their life circumstances, for example, people who use public transit to get to work and due to the bus schedules would not make it home from work until after their curfew. Then, when these people breach their condition, they are recharged with a breach offence. This generates a cycle of breaching and charging which can result in an increased burden on systemic resources, without necessarily contributing to public safety, and capturing conduct that we do not want to penalize.

Bill C-75 would provide for a new judicial referral hearings process rather than the existing criminal justice process to deal with a charge for breach, to deal more effectively with certain minor administration of justice offences, for example, a breach of drinking alcohol contrary to the bail conditions. However, this could only occur if there were no harm to a victim, for example, physical, emotional, or financial, and it would also mean that rather than charging a person who breaches conditions or fails to appear in court, the police or prosecutor could refer the breach to a court that could in turn either dismiss the matter, vary the bail conditions, or revoke bail.

This new tool would also assist in reducing the overrepresentation of indigenous accused and marginalized groups by allowing for particular circumstances of those accused persons, for example, mental illness, addictions, and homelessness, to be considered in determining how best to address a breach. I submit to the House that those are precisely the types of policy prescriptions which will reduce overrepresentation of indigenous peoples in our jails right at the very outset of the criminal process system at bail.

I will now discuss how Bill C-75 is changing the way we approach preliminary inquiries.

Preliminary inquiries are optional hearings to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to commit an accused to trial. There is no constitutional right to a preliminary inquiry, as the Supreme Court of Canada has held in prior cases, and their uses vary across the country. In some instances, it is either complemented or even replaced by an out-of-court discovery process, pursuant to provincial rules of court or policy directives.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-75 would restrict the availability of preliminary inquiries to offences punishable by imprisonment for life. The bill would also allow the justice presiding at the preliminary inquiry to limit the scope of the inquiry to specific issues and to limit the witnesses to be heard on these issues.

[*English*]

Restricting preliminary inquiries in this manner will reduce demands on court resources, have more serious cases heard more expeditiously, and aim to reduce what is often called re-victimization, requiring victims or witnesses to testify more than once, both at the preliminary inquiry and then again, potentially, at a contested trial.

Again, consistent with other submissions I have made thus far, this is what we have heard from victims and communities across the country.

● (2135)

Let me turn to streamlining the classification of offences. I know this is something on which my colleagues across the aisle have commented frequently.

The Criminal Code categorizes offences as summary conviction, indictable or hybrid. Those are three general categories under which one offence will fall. This classification tends to indicate the degree of seriousness of the conduct covered by an offence, the available sentence range, and determines the mode of trial, for example, the level of court and whether a preliminary inquiry and/or a jury trial are available. However, some of these classifications are outdated and not always reflective of our societal values.

For example, only in exceptionally rare circumstances will the offence of damaging documents warrant a prison sentence greater than two years. Therefore, it makes sense for the prosecutor to be able to choose a more efficient procedure if the facts do not warrant a longer-term sentence. In other words, it will make sense to trust the independence of the crown to exercise its judgment in the best tradition of the crown so we save our scarce judicial resources and can get to the more serious trials, like murder and those tragic cases we hear about so often in the chamber. I urge my Conservative colleagues in particular to give reflection to this measure, which will indeed help access to justice.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-75 proposes to hybridize indictable offences punishable by a maximum penalty of 10 years or less. It would increase the default maximum penalty for summary conviction offences to two years less a day. It would also extend the limitation period for summary conviction offences to 12 months from the current 6 months.

[*English*]

These reforms provide increased flexibility to the crown to select the most appropriate procedural route in light of all of the circumstances of the case and are expected to result in cases being heard more quickly, thereby reducing delays.

I will now speak to how our government is improving the jury process.

Under section 11 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, accused persons charged with an indictable offence carrying a maximum penalty of five years or more are guaranteed a right to a trial before an impartial jury of their peers. This does not extend to a jury of a particular composition nor to one that proportionately represents all the diverse groups in Canadian society, as the Supreme Court of Canada found in the R. v. Kokopenace case.

[*Translation*]

To improve the efficiency of the jury selection process and enhance public confidence in the process by promoting the empanelling of more impartial, more representative juries, Bill C-75 would be achieving several aims. First, it would abolish peremptory challenges of jurors by the crown and the defence. Second, it would allow the judge to direct that a juror stand by for reasons of maintaining public confidence in the administration of justice. Third, it would update the grounds for challenging a juror for cause. Lastly, it would allow the judge to determine whether a ground of challenge is true.

[*English*]

Bill C-75 seeks to ensure that our criminal justice system is more efficient, more effective, more fair, and more accessible. The bill demonstrates that our government is following through with platform commitments and it is following through on those platform commitments on the basis of a bedrock of consultation that has been exercised across the continuum. We have listened to victims. We have listened to stakeholders. We have listened to those individuals on the judiciary with whom we work very closely. This has contributed to a very constructive dialogue. More important, for the benefit of all Canadians, it is legislation that is principled, that is based in evidence, and that will improve the quality of the criminal justice system for all Canadians.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member a question about mandatory minimums. A lot of this bill's intent is to clear up court backlogs. Mandatory minimums are the cause of 68% of court challenges in the country. Despite the Liberals having promised to do this for years, they have not addressed mandatory minimums in the legislation. Therefore, when will the government finally address this issue?

● (2140)

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for pointing out what is the underlying root cause of the problem, namely the overrepresentation of indigenous peoples and marginalized peoples in our jail system. The Minister of Justice and the Prime Minister have spoken very eloquently about this problem.

I am very proud that the bill would address the core of that problem by requiring the court to take into consideration that indigenous background and the background of marginalized peoples who come before the courts at the very outset, at the very beginning of the criminal justice system, at bail. I hope my hon. colleague will take note of that.

With regard to mandatory minimums, as the Minister of Justice has said on numerous occasions, we continue to study this issue. We need to ensure we have a policy and a sentencing reform package that embraces all Canadians. There are many views about this, but we want to ensure we land on a policy and a sentencing reform package that stands the test of time. In the meantime, unlike the Conservatives, we will listen and be respectful of court decisions as they pass judgment on mandatory minimums.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, while there is much in Bill C-75 that I support, particularly getting rid of peremptory challenges in choosing juries, I am very disturbed by the changes being proposed to section 657 of the Criminal Code. I cannot imagine how this came so far. I hope the hon. member knows I am referring to changes that will mean police officers need not be on the witness stand, available to a defence attorney who sent word to cross-examine those police officers. They could submit an affidavit or previously submitted evidence.

The credibility of a police officer on the stand very often is the difference between an innocent person going to jail or not. This has been universally condemned by the criminal laws. Was there any consultation on this? Is it a mistake? Could it be changed at committee? I hope the answer is that this was a mistake.

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my hon. colleague that we have been listening very closely to the Criminal Lawyers' Association as well as other stakeholders who have given us input on this provision.

I also want to assure her that the objective of this provision, along with a suite of other measures, is to ensure that our courts are allowed the proper flexibility to streamline hearings so we are not quibbling over non-contentious immaterial facts. As someone who practised in the criminal justice system, we see far too much of this bad judgment exercise.

It is not just about revising the bill; it is about a change in the culture of complacency, at which the Supreme Court of Canada has encouraged all of us to look very closely. I look forward to further discussions with my hon. colleague as well as others on this provision.

**Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy we were addressing peremptory challenges in the bill. When I did my first jury trial, one of the most surprising things for me was how little information we had when we made these decisions about our jury. We had very basic information about the person. We do not ask questions like we see on TV and we had to make a quick judgment call, as a lawyer, as to whether that person could stay on the trial.

I believe there is more work to be done. There are also questions at the provincial level about how a jury list is selected. How does the member see these changes to peremptory challenges? How does he see it as helping to get stereotyping and those kinds of prejudicial things that we can make when we have very little information and we are looking at a person and deciding whether he or she should be on the jury?

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for all of her work in this area. I know she was a member of the legal profession prior to her taking office. I always invite and welcome her thoughts and her input on this. However, perhaps one of the most important things she has mentioned is the notion that the problem about the chronic under-representation of indigenous peoples and marginalized peoples on our juries far predate our time in office.

There have been reports that go back as far as when Senator Sinclair was a judge in Manitoba. More recent, retired Supreme Court of Canada Justice Frank Iacobucci submitted a report in 2013 to the Attorney General of Ontario in which it was well-documented that much work needed to be done, including taking a close look at the use of peremptory challenge.

Bill C-75 would enhance the accountability and transparency around the methods by which the parties would contribute to the selection of juries. It would require them to provide a reason. In other words, it would open up that box of thinking that currently is able to be exercised without any review, without any comment from the courts.

We are confident that by doing this, we will see more individuals step forward and contribute to juries that are composed of and are reflective of the diversity of our communities, and that is a very positive thing.

● (2145)

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the previous Parliament and the previous government, I sat on the subcommittee for judicial appointments of the justice committee. That was quite an experience learning about the process by which judges are employed in this country.

Since we have arrived in government here, this member has played an integral role in transforming the appointments process. I think it would be helpful for the House if Canadians watching, listening, or reading this debate understood the kind of steps that have been taken by this member and the Minister of Justice in transforming the way in which we are recruiting, selecting, and appointing judges to the bench.

Can he help us understand that better?

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question, if for no other reason than it allows us to take a step back from Bill C-75, and take a look at one of the many other areas that we are approaching reform of our justice system. Of course, in addition to Bill C-75, we have a judicial appointments process, which I am quite proud to say the Minister of Justice has completely renewed, in consultation with her colleagues. By renewing it, I mean that it is now open, merit based, and reflective of the diversity and tremendous talent and experience that we see across the continuum of the country.

In direct response to my hon. colleague's question, I am quite proud to say that we now have, since taking office, appointed over 170 federal judges across the country. My hon. colleagues from the Conservative benches often take the opportunity to criticize this government wrongly and unjustifiably about our lack of progress in the province of Alberta. I would simply point out that there are now five more judges in Alberta than at any point under the Harper Conservatives. That is something we should all celebrate.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member if he could elaborate more on administrative justice offences. I do not think the general public realizes what a burden these are on the system.

While he is thinking about that, I just want to express some thanks to him. One is to thank him for coming to my riding and talking to the various people in the justice system. He is right: it was a very comprehensive consultation across the country.

Second, I am delighted that this bill is reducing the over-representation of indigenous people in the justice system, and people with mental health issues. People have been talking about this for years, but finally someone is doing something about it.

I want to just give an example of people with FASD. They do not understand that they have to be at an appointment. They do an administrative offence and they are back in the system, taking up all sorts of time for absolutely no reason at all, because they should not have been in it in the first place, and it is slowing down the justice system.

**Mr. Marco Mendicino:** Mr. Speaker, I did have the great privilege of visiting my hon. colleague's riding to conduct one of the over 20 round tables across the country, in partnership with the Minister of Justice, as part of the criminal justice review. I also want to take the opportunity to thank him in this chamber for his very deft and agile driving to get me back to the airport on time so that I could catch my flight back home. It was quite an adventure and with all the daylight, certainly it helped our navigation through the busy streets of Whitehorse.

However, to his question, in particular when it comes to administration of justice offences, this may be an area that much of the public does not have a lay understanding of. If a person gets charged with an offence and they are on bail, the person is asked to abide by certain conditions. In my remarks, I refer to a curfew, which is one of the more routinely imposed conditions. There may be good reasons why a curfew is needed in some cases to protect the public, but in many other cases it is not required.

There are far too many of these administration of justice offences in the courts. In Ontario, they take up nearly 40% of all judicial resources. We need to reduce those offences so that we can get to the serious cases. Bill C-75 helps us achieve that.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's speech. He is very learned and comes from a profession that understands things well. I did pass through law school at one time, but decided that another profession was of more interest to me, so my speech will probably be a little more the layman's type, and will probably have some rhetoric in it that I am sure he will rather enjoy.

I will be speaking on Bill C-75, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other acts and to make consequential amendments to other acts. That is quite the title, and it probably should come as no surprise that it is an omnibus bill. It makes massive reforms to our criminal justice system, and in fact, it re-tables three bills already on the Order Paper: Bill C-28, on the victim surcharge; Bill C-38, on consecutive sentencing for human trafficking; and Bill C-39, which repeals unconstitutional provisions.

The government simply cannot seem to manage its legislative agenda. It waited until late in its mandate, and now Parliament is expected to rush through debate on these important matters.

What is apparent is that Bill C-75 is a big, complicated bill that is supposed to fix the issues facing our justice system. It does contain provisions that I could support. Repealing unconstitutional provisions in the Criminal Code is a positive proposal. Increasing the maximum term for repeat offenders involved in domestic violence also makes a lot of sense.

However, the bill also introduces a host of other issues. This legislation should have been split so we could have debated and voted on some of its parts, rather than as an omnibus bill. There is far too much here to be considered in such a short time. The Liberals promised they would not introduce an omnibus bill, but here we are.

We have known for a long time that our justice system is dangerously backlogged. A primary stated objective of Bill C-75 is to reduce delays in our justice system. The R. v. Jordan ruling, now known as the Jordan rule or principle, imposes strict timelines on criminal trials: 30 months for the criminals, and 18 months for the indictable.

This objective is very important. Thousands of criminal trials across Canada have been stayed, including murder trials, for going over the imposed time limits. We have seen the stories of individuals accused of horrendous crimes being let off because of massive delays in the court system. The problem is only getting worse, but this bill is finally supposed to do something about this serious problem.

Before I get into the details of this bill, I have to ask: Why has this government not taken steps to appoint more judges? It has been pointed out that the government has appointed many, but we still have 59 vacancies. Let us get them all filled so that we can improve the justice system. Appointing judges may have been a faster way to address the delays in our justice system, rather than forcing an omnibus bill through Parliament. I know that the Liberals have left appointments unfilled in other government agencies, but the judicial ones are critical. At the very least, they need to fill those. I am sure that is something they will do quickly, right?

The biggest red flag in this legislation is the hybridization of many indictable-only offences, done by adding summary convictions as a sentencing option. Simply put, serious crimes deserve serious penalties, but some of the offences listed in the bill are undoubtedly, to me and many of my constituents, serious crimes. These include participating in a terrorist group; impaired driving causing bodily harm; kidnapping a minor; possessing stolen property over $5,000, which is a huge concern in my rural riding; participating in activities of a criminal organization; municipal corruption or influencing a municipal official; committing infanticide; extortion by libel; advocating genocide; arson for fraudulent purpose; advertising and dealing in counterfeit money; and many more. There are a lot of serious crimes in here that are going to change. Many of these crimes are classified as indictment-only for a reason. They should not be punishable under a summary conviction, with a possible mere fine. That option has been included, and it should not be there.

● (2150)

The bill would also delay consecutive sentencing for human traffickers. Human trafficking is a severe crime. There is a cross-party committee dealing with this crime. It is a severe problem and deserves severe punishment. We know it is taking place in Canada. It is an international issue that needs to be combatted with all the tools at our disposal. Why would the government weaken our criminal justice system with these changes? We all need to address the backlogs in our courts system, but some of these measures just do not make sense.

In my riding of Bow River, we have been dealing with serious issues involving rural crime. I am happy that motion by the member for Lakeland, Motion No. 167, was passed last week in this House. I believe it will be an important step toward actually doing something about rural crime. The statistics show that crime in rural areas has increased significantly in all three prairie provinces. However, right on the heels of adopting this important motion, we have this bill taking two steps backwards. This is going to be hard to explain to the constituents in my riding who are dealing with constant rural crime. Residents across the country are going to be shaking their heads in disbelief at this one. I have heard from many constituents who have suffered break-ins, property theft, and threats to person. We have held round tables in locations in ridings across Alberta and heard from many people who are living in fear. They do not have confidence that the criminal acts taking place around their homes will be addressed. In many cases, the RCMP is simply stretched too thinly across the vast rural areas to respond promptly.

I am particularly concerned that this bill would relax sentences for crimes like possession of stolen property and participating in criminal gangs. It is hard enough to catch criminals engaged in rural crimes. In many cases, the criminals are long gone before anyone can show up to deal with them. When it takes police officers hours or until the next day to get to the scene, there is plenty of time to disappear. This is not like crime in a city where people reasonably expect police to show up on their doorstep in minutes. When criminals are caught, there is a reasonable expectation that they will face serious consequences for their actions. It is hard enough to convince people to report crimes when they occur. We encourage them to do so because it is very important for the statistics of the police services. The police need to know what is actually happening in communities, but people are afraid to report crimes, or they say it is a waste of time. The police need the statistics to make decisions related to how to best enforce the law, but my constituents do not always believe they will make any difference in the justice system anymore. It is going to be that much harder to encourage people to report rural crimes if this bill receives royal assent. At a bare minimum, people need to know that if they report a crime and the criminal responsible is actually apprehended, there will be serious consequences for that individual. We need real deterrents, not slaps on the wrist, to keep Canadians' faith in the justice system.

They talk about Alberta judges, and yes, we are short of judges, but here is the other side of it. I have spoken with legal people and they say that the number of crown prosecutors is drastically short. There are few crown prosecutors willing to do it. As the number of crown prosecutors has decreased, there are fewer of them who will work on this huge workload. The average caseload that crown prosecutors have is twice what it used to be years ago. Legal aid lawyers are quitting. The pay they are getting has decreased, or they are not being paid at all. If they are moving to summary convictions, two years less a day, the jails are full. I have seen downloading from governments before; this is a huge download from the federal government to the provincial governments. They are going to download into the provinces' judicial systems by changing convictions from indictable to summary convictions. As the prosecutors have told me, they have been told to clear the docket and keep only the very serious cases and kick all the rest of the cases out, not to take them to court but to get the charges dropped, to kick them out.

● (2155)

There is a joke around the provincial jail system that if there is an arrest for car theft, the officers should make sure their car is locked when the criminal goes out the door, because the criminal is likely to steal their car to go home. With the shortage of prosecutors, the time that is available to put people in jail for two years less a day is a huge download to the provincial system.

It is especially wrong that this bill is being introduced at the same time we are considering Bill C-71. That bill would do nothing to address rural crime and gang violence. Nothing in it would make a difference to the criminals using illegal firearms. All the bill does is target law-abiding firearms owners with new, poorly designed, heavy-handed regulations.

Farmers in my riding make use of all kinds of firearms on their property. Firearms are basic to rural life in many cases. I have heard from many constituents who are very concerned about Bill C-71. Why would the government treat farmers like criminals, while reducing sentences for rural criminals at the same time? Summary convictions and fines are just kicking the cases out, because there is no time to deal with them.

Again, it makes no sense. The government's agenda is looking increasingly incoherent, especially from the perspective of rural residents. Will these measures do anything to reduce the backlog? No. They are just downloading the problem on the provinces. Just as Chrétien did with the transfer payments, the current government is going to do it with the judicial system to download to the provinces.

Our legal institutions are overwhelmed by the number of cases that need to be addressed. The bill could stretch them to a breaking point, as the crown prosecutors in Alberta told me. We could have many more cases thrown out for taking too long. Jordan's principle is going to come in and many people will walk the street because of it. In other words, criminals will walk. That is not a result anyone wants to see, especially when rural crime is involved. It is deeply painful for victims of crime and it is dangerous for the Canadian public at large to lose faith in the justice system, like the rural residents in my constituency.

The government seems to be dumping more problems on provinces and municipalities. It leaves them to clean up the mess. We have already seen how the government has done this with cannabis legislation. Its approach has left provinces and municipalities scrambling to accommodate the new laws and pay for their implementation.

I have heard from town councillors across my constituency how concerned they are about the cannabis legalization and how they are going to pay for it. They do not know how the small towns and villages will handle all the issues that are coming down the pipe, just like the carbon tax. The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association has expressed grave doubts about how its members are going to get ready for legalization. It has been conveying these concerns to the government for a long time, but the Liberals are not listening.

The federal government simply punts its problems on to subnational governments and claims to have taken action. That is exactly what it did with the cannabis legalization, and that trend is continuing with Bill C-75. We need real leadership, not just passing the buck to the provinces.

The legislation would weaken our criminal justice system by relaxing the sentences for many serious crimes. That list was not even the extent of it. It is a very broad bill. It downloads the delays in our court system onto the provinces. It also changes the victim surcharge, which is a deeply disappointing departure from our former government's priority of putting victims first. It would remove the requirement of the attorney general to determine whether to seek an adult sentence in certain circumstances. It would remove the power of a youth justice court to make an order to lift the ban on publication in the case of a young person who receives a youth sentence for a violent offence. It would delay consecutive sentencing for human traffickers, and that is wrong. It would make our justice system more like a revolving door than it is now. It would make rural crime in my riding and across Canada even harder to deal with, and it would make people not trust the justice system.

We need to deal with the problems in our justice system, but this is not the way to do it. This is simply a huge, poorly designed bill. It would make many changes that I simply cannot support.

● (2200)

**Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, where to begin? There is just so much that is fundamentally wrong in my learned colleague's remarks.

Let us start with the Conservative record on judicial appointments: based on partisanship, and at a slow rate that prevented individuals from getting access to justice. Let us then continue to the member's comments on what this bill would do when it comes to the hybridization of offences. When it comes to Conservative commentary, there is scarcely another area that is more misrepresented and more misleading to the public than the hybridization of offences.

The hybridization of offences is informed by the independent, properly exercised discretion of the crown, the prosecutor. One of the things the prosecutor is required to take into consideration is the seriousness of the offence, whether or not somebody has been hurt. That will determine where the offence goes, whether it goes to superior court or whether it stays in summary court. However, in no way does it detract from the fitness of a sentence, which will be imposed by a judge.

Lastly, my friend touched on a number of other bills besides Bill C-75, one of which is Bill C-46. This is perhaps the most perplexing of all his comments. I hear my hon. colleagues heckling. He wants to keep the roads safe, but his Conservative colleague in the Senate is now opposed to mandatory alcohol screening, the number one deterrent that would keep our roads safer. How does the member explain that?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

● (2205)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** Before we go to the hon. member for Bow River, I will say that I am very interested to hear what he has to say, so I assume everybody will stay quiet and let the hon. member for Bow River give his answer.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that you are interested in my answer.

I know that my learned colleague is waiting with bated breath to hear what I might say. I obviously got him very excited with what I said before, which I thought I just might do.

I really believe that, fundamentally, this is a download onto the provincial governments. It is just another example of a senior level of government dumping the expenses down on the next level of government. The member referred to the prosecutors making decisions, but in Alberta there may not be any left. They are quitting. They are tired of it. The caseload in Alberta for crown prosecutors is double the average of a few years ago. They have had it. They are not going to be there to do what the member said. This will be just too much.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I have concerns about parts of this bill, but I see much in it that is welcome and important.

Does my hon. friend from Bow River not agree that doing away with peremptory challenges would help create fairer juries for the accused? I do not know if he has any thoughts on the Colten Boushie case, but we do need to do better in this country in having juries that are able to fairly assess a criminally accused.

I do not want to comment on a particular case, but clearly this is an important reform.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Mr. Speaker, the member said she would not respond to a specific case, so I will not either.

As with my colleagues in the legal profession, I do believe we have a tremendous legal profession. I trust the process they have used in choosing how it works. They have a tremendous responsibility on their hands. I believe in both the defence and the prosecutor, and the system they have. It should be a process they use, and historically it has worked. I want to leave it there. It is not for me to step into that one.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on his assessment and analysis of this. As he pointed out, he is bringing a sort of lay perspective to this. I appreciate the fact that he has been consulting with his constituents, as I know he does during the summer. In fact, that is one of the good things about the bill. The Liberals are putting it in at the end of June, just as they did with a bill last year, and by the time the summer was over, so many people found out that they were going to remove protection for religious services and members of the clergy that they had to rethink this. That is what I am thinking is going to happen here.

When the hon. gentleman is talking to his constituents this summer, I am sure he will bring this up and get some feedback from them. For instance, do they like the idea that people convicted of human trafficking will not get a consecutive sentence if they trafficked 25 human beings as opposed to one human being? If his constituents agree with that, it would be interesting to hear. I would also be interested to hear if some of his constituents say that it is more serious if people traffic 25 human beings, so they should get a consecutive sentence. I would also be interested to know whether his constituents think, after they get a chance to analyze this over the summer, that if people are participants in and members of a terrorist organization they should be eligible for the lowest possible criminal offence.

The Liberals are saying that everyone loves this and that all these different changes to the Criminal Code are just wonderful, but I think this is one of the good things about the summer. We get a chance to hear from our constituents, and I know the hon. member will do that.

● (2210)

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Mr. Speaker, I know from my colleague's background how learned he is. I am home virtually every weekend, and this is an issue about which people address me on the street, in meetings, and at round tables. My fear is that a number of people do not trust the justice system anymore, because of examples like the ones the member gave. What I fear is that a number of people have said that they will take care of their own rural communities themselves—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota):** I just want to remind hon. members that some members are gifted with very piercing voices, and when they are sitting next to the microphone that is on, it pierces that much more. I want to remind them that if they are going to say something, they should whisper it and not shout it or speak in a loud voice.

The hon. member for Bow River.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Mr. Speaker, I have never been accused of having a piercing voice, so I assume it was not me.

The member mentioned those specific things. I get letters and notes. I have a stack on my desk tonight that talk about these things, which I read through before I came here. I get written comments and telephone calls, and I meet people on the street. My fear is that people now do not trust the justice system to keep them safe and to deal with the criminals. They feel like they are victims over and over again. I fear that we are creating people in our communities who want to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves because the judicial system in our country is not going to do it. They fear for themselves, and that is wrong.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, nothing shows the difference between Liberals and Conservatives more than this idea of hybridization of offences, which takes away the discretion and knowledge of judges, who have heard all the evidence, to make decisions. It has been a constant theme with the Conservatives, and of course we disagree with that. It does not give good decisions.

In cases where the level of the offence should be lower because of the conditions, sometimes the prosecutor has to throw out the whole case because it is not hybridized. The penalty would be too serious, and it would be cruel and unreasonable justice. Having that philosophy is actually allowing criminals to go free.

However, that is not my question. My question is related to the root causes. We all want to reduce rural crime and remove the root causes. For example, if there is broken glass in a rural kitchen and people keep walking across the floor and cutting their feet, putting Band-Aids on every time is not the way to deal with it. We need to deal with the root cause and clean up the glass. Therefore, I would like to know some of the suggestions the member is making to his party to remove the root causes of rural crime, which we would all like to remove.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Mr. Speaker, I absolutely agree that parking the ambulances at the bottom of the cliff to take care of the bodies does not make any sense. They need to go to the top of the cliff to find out why they are going there.

At the status of women committee, members will find my name on the unanimous report on the percentage of indigenous women who are incarcerated. It will be submitted within days in this House. Whose name? It is my name. It is there in support of the recommendations to find ways to reduce the number of indigenous women who are incarcerated.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Surrey —Newton.

I am pleased to rise today to lend my support to Bill C-75, introduced by our government on March 29, 2018. Today my remarks will address how the bill would contribute to eliminating intimate partner violence. Intimate partner violence is one of the most common forms of gender-based violence. The term includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by an intimate partner.

I would like to reiterate some very shocking statistics the Minister of Justice shared when she spoke to Bill C-75 at second reading.

In 2016, according to police-reported data from Statistics Canada, over 93,000 people in Canada experienced intimate partner violence. Sadly, intimate partner violence is a reality for at least one in two women in Canada. Women who are indigenous, trans, elderly, new to Canada, or living with a disability are at increased risk of experiencing violence due to systemic barriers and failures. The personal and often lifelong consequences of violence against women are enormous.

This data also shows that in 2016, violence within dating relationships was more common than violence within spousal relationships. These statistics are devastating. I believe that we, as a government, must work to continue to strengthen our responses to this complex social problem that so disproportionately impacts women, particularly those who are in certain types of relationships.

During the 2015 election, our government campaigned on a promise to give more support to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sexual harassment and to ensure that more perpetrators were brought to justice. As well, the minister's mandate letter included implementing our platform commitment to toughen criminal laws and bail conditions in cases of domestic assault, in consultation with stakeholders, with the goal of keeping survivors and children safe.

In Bill C-75, we are fulfilling these commitments. This bill would standardize the meaning of "intimate partner" for all Criminal Code purposes by defining the term. The new definition would specify that an intimate partner would include a current or former spouse, a common-law partner, and a dating partner.

These changes are long overdue. As I just noted, the data demonstrates that a substantial number of violent incidents are committed in the context of a dating rather than a cohabiting relationship. Since violence against a dating partner has long been recognized in Canadian courts as a form of intimate partner or domestic violence, the reforms would codify what is already standard practice in many jurisdictions, thereby clarifying the law. Specifying that "intimate partner" includes a person's current or former spouse, common-law partner, and dating partner would reflect sentencing decisions that have considered abuse of both current and former intimate partners as an aggravating factor, even though the existing provision does not specify that abuse of current or former intimate partners should be taken into account. Specifying that sentencing judges must consider any evidence of abuse of current or former spouses, common-law partners, or dating partners as an aggravating factor would not only clarify the law, but as previously mentioned, would support one of our government's platform commitments to ensure that all forms of intimate partner violence were considered an aggravating factor at sentencing.

Bill C-75 would also clarify that strangling, choking, or suffocating another person would constitute the more serious form of assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm, which is punishable by a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment. These types of assaults, which often occur in the intimate partner violence context, have serious and even deadly consequences for victims. However, under existing law, courts do not always recognize this greater harm. The proposed amendment would ensure that this type of assaultive conduct was treated more seriously.

Further, in support of our government's electoral platform commitments, Bill C-75 would also allow for the imposition of a higher maximum penalty where offenders have been repeatedly violent toward an intimate partner. In such cases, the crown would be able to give notice that a higher maximum penalty would be sought. Allowing courts to impose a term of imprisonment that was higher than the applicable maximum penalty in repeat intimate partner violence cases would better reflect the severity of the conduct and assist in better protecting victims. For example, in some cases, the higher maximum penalty would ensure that sanctions other than imprisonment, such as conditional sentence orders, were not available.

● (2215)

The bill would strengthen the bail provisions of the Criminal Code by imposing a reverse onus at bail for an accused charged with an offence involving violence against an intimate partner if the accused had a criminal record with at least one prior conviction involving intimate partner violence. In the context of bail, a reverse onus means that the accused, rather than the crown, would have to justify why he or she should not be detained in custody until the start of the trial, having regard for the safety of the victim and public confidence in the administration of justice. This would ensure that an accused's history of intimate partner violence would be brought to the attention of the bail court at the outset of the hearing, regardless of whether the current charge involved the same victim or a different one. The reverse onus would also signal to the bail court the seriousness of the alleged offence as well as the increased risk of recidivism in this context.

Bill C-75 would require all bail courts to consider, in making any order relating to bail, whether an accused was charged with an offence where violence was used, threatened, or attempted against an intimate partner. Bail courts would be required to take this factor into account when making a number of possible bail-related determinations, including the decision to impose an order not to communicate with a particular victim, witness, or other person; a detention order; or an order to release the accused on bail.

In particular, if the accused was to be released into the community pending trial, the bail judge would have to consider the fact that the alleged offence was against an intimate partner in determining whether bail conditions were necessary, and if so, what types of conditions would be appropriate. Requiring bail courts to consider the safety of the accused's intimate partner before releasing an accused on bail would afford increased protection to victims of intimate partner violence.

Bill C-75's intimate partner violence amendments would provide the courts with the means to denounce intimate partner violence to better protect victims, including prior to trial, and to ensure that the sentences imposed were proportionate to the gravity of the offence and the degree of responsibility of the offender.

Concisely put, Bill C-75 would make marked improvements to the treatment of intimate partner violence in our criminal laws. It would establish a higher maximum sentence and reverse onus at bail for repeat offenders, recognize strangulation as an elevated form of assault, and broaden the parameters of intimate partner violence, which would now include current or former spouses, common-law partners, and dating partners.

These reforms are sorely needed. I hope that all my colleagues will join me in seeking to end intimate partner violence and will support Bill C-75.

● (2220)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I have touched on a few other aspects of Bill C-75, and I certainly agree with my hon. colleague that doing more to deal with intimate partner violence is critical.

I am troubled that the bill would eliminate preliminary inquiries. A preliminary inquiry is typically a time when the defence gets to test the evidence. It is something of a dry run or dress rehearsal for what is going to come at trial, and it allows the defence to properly prepare and may even lead to deciding not to proceed to trial because the evidence is too weak.

I do not understand the rationale for eliminating preliminary inquiries, all for efficiency. It is trampling the rights of the accused, who may be innocent, in the interest of efficiency. At least that is how I see it right now, standing here tonight.

I would love to know what the defence and rationale is for getting rid of preliminary inquiries.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** Mr. Speaker, as stated earlier, getting rid of preliminary inquiries would not only make the system more efficient but would also help to serve the victims. We have seen through speaking with stakeholders that when we have preliminary inquiries, we are actually subjecting victims to being re-victimized, and that is certainly something we do not want. There are two benefits right there. One is to have the system be more efficient. Second, it is more compassionate, because we would not re-victimize victims.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives often talk about their biggest objective being the protection of victims of crime and getting justice for victims of crime.

I would like to thank the member for his eloquent speech and for his answer to the first question about how this legislation would protect victims of crime and provide some justice. It was excellent.

I would like to ask him about something totally different in the bill. We have all heard stories about back in the middle ages when a starving child would steal a loaf of bread, and the justice was to cut off his hand, which obviously did not make any sense.

In the bill there could be an exemption to paying the victim surcharge if the court was satisfied that the payment would cause the offender undue hardship. I would ask if the member agrees. If people are poor and have no means to get along, and an undue financial hardship is added to that, it forces them into crime, into petty theft, to feed their children or pay the rent. Does that really make any sense? Does that help the justice system? Does he agree with that provision that no one has talked about yet in tonight's debate?

● (2225)

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague brings up a very good point, because ultimately, what we want to do is have true justice. If we truly want to have justice, we have to take into account many things. The example that was brought up does not take into account the victim's age or circumstance. When we take into account different things that in our country affect those who are marginalized, we are doing a better job of serving the public good and administering justice.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a rare opportunity that I get to follow up with a question for the hon. member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

I understand that the benefit of going to trial faster is that it may make things easier on victims of crime. I care deeply about victims of crime and wish the previous government had followed all the recommendations of the ombudsman for victims of crime. However, there is nothing more important in the criminal justice system than the presumption of innocence and the right of the accused to a fair trial. If we eliminate preliminary inquiries, and innocent people go to jail, is that not a factor that should weigh in the consideration of the benefits of eliminating preliminary inquiries?

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** Mr. Speaker, I applaud my colleague's concern, because ultimately, we are trying to do the same thing, and that is administer a good justice system. The person being accused is still entitled to a trial. We are just following up on consultations with stakeholders, with what judges have said and what legal experts have said, to make that very administration of justice more effective and more efficient.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank the hon. member for Mississauga—Streetsville for sharing his time with me and for his eloquent speech, particularly on the topic of intimate partner violence, which is a reality in the part of the country I come from. He covered it very well.

I am very proud to rise today to speak on Bill C-75. This legislation builds on our commitment to build safer and stronger neighbourhoods by making necessary investments in our police forces, reforming our criminal justice system, and supporting victims of addiction. As the member of Parliament for Surrey—Newton, I have listened to the priorities of my constituents about being tough on guns and gangs and making sure those deserving of full weight of the justice system receive it, and those needing our support and assistance receive it as well.

We have taken many great steps to accomplish this. For instance, in budget 2018, we announced over $300 million to be spent in the next five years and $100 million per year after that to support the RCMP, the CBSA, and other public safety agencies in cracking down on illegal trafficking of guns and drugs. We have invested over $180 million to help the RCMP recruit and train more cadets that it can continue to keep our growing cities safe. We have also taken action to support victims of substance abuse with the development of supervised injection sites across Canada, a model that began in Vancouver and that shows that with a compassionate and pragmatic approach, we can make a real difference in people's lives and keep our streets safe.

With this bill, we recognize that action must be taken to ensure that our court system moves quickly to hold offenders to account and to protect victims. In the past decade, Canada's court system has been burdened with administrative offences, as well as longer and more complex cases. These delays were cited by the Supreme Court as unacceptable and, therefore, it has established strict timelines that cases have to adhere to or risk being stayed. This is unacceptable to victims, and that is why our government, the Prime Minister, and the minister responsible have brought this bill forward.

This bill would make several key changes to the culture in our court system, beginning with limiting the use of of preliminary inquiries to more serious offences to ensure that criminal cases can proceed more quickly to trial; strengthening our response to intimate partner violence; streamlining the bail process to ensure swift access to justice; providing judges with the more robust tools they need to manage the cases before them; improving the jury selection process to ensure that juries are more representative of the Canadian population; providing more discretion on administration of justice offences; and reclassifying offences to allow courts to deal more efficiently with less serious matters, freeing up limited resources for more serious offences.

I want to touch on some of the key reforms in this bill, beginning with the changes to the administration of justice offences. These are acts such as failing to comply with bail conditions or failing to appear in court. These offences are unrelated to public safety, but, nevertheless, burden individuals with unnecessary and significant delays.

● (2230)

Nearly 40% of all adult cases involve at least one of these administrative charges. Therefore, this bill proposes a new approach. Police would retain the option to lay a new charge for the breach or failure to appear where appropriate. However, if the offence did not involve physical or emotional harm to a victim, property damage, or economic loss, the police would have an additional option of referring the accused to a judicial referral hearing.

We are also making changes to protect victims of domestic violence by ensuring that more offenders are brought to justice. Bill C-75 proposes a higher sentencing range for repeat offences involving intimate partner violence. It would broaden the definition of "intimate partner" to include dating partners and former partners, and clearly specifies that evidence of intimate partner abuse is an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes.

The last area of reform I want to speak about is selection. The defining value of our country is our respect for equality and commitment to promoting multiculturalism, but we continually need to do more to make sure that this value remains in place, and one of those areas that has long gone unchanged is our justice system.

It is a fact that we have lower levels of representation of indigenous and minority communities in juries, and that needs to change to ensure the integrity of the justice system. That is why we are bringing in this reform. Abolishing challenges and reinforcing the power of judges to "stand aside" certain jurors in order to increase diversity and giving judges the power to decide challenges for cause will bring more fairness and transparency to the system and encourage juries that are more representative of our communities.

In closing, there are few things more important than making sure that our neighbourhoods are safe for families and our children. Whether it is making sure that we have more police officers on the ground, laws that target guns on our streets, or supporting victims of addiction, we need to keep finding new solutions for the safety of our nation. I believe this bill does that.

With a court system that is more efficient, transparent, and fair, we will uphold its integrity, hold offenders to account, and protect victims. For these reasons, I look forward to seeing all members support this bill.

● (2235)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, the bill is very disappointing for those of us on the opposition benches who sat through the 41st Parliament. We saw a radical overhaul of the criminal justice system by the previous government in ways that undermined our criminal justice system, overloaded our jails, and passed the cost on to the provinces, and here I speak of the mandatory minimums.

Mandatory minimums were added to many things. I opposed them at the time, and I really did expect that the current Minister of Justice would take on this issue of mandatory minimums head-on. Now we have Bill C-75, which is fairly voluminous, but it ignores this substantial issue that is crying out for reform.

I wonder if my hon. colleague has any idea why we do not see the removal of the mandatory minimum sentences that are sprinkled throughout our criminal system. Many of them have now been struck down by the Supreme Court. Surely we should be acting to remove them.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, when the leader of the Green Party was talking about the previous Harper Conservative government, I remembered that their focus was on building jails. On the other hand, when we look at our government, it is using a balanced approach. On one side we want to make sure that we have a justice system that deals with criminals, but on the other hand we want to make sure that we have the programs in place that can rehabilitate offenders, that can educate, and that we have enough police forces on the ground to deal with this situation.

When it comes to minimum mandatory sentencing, I believe there should be strong sentences. Victims deserve that justice. In fact, this is the bill that helps those victims get justice by bringing it—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Unfortunately, I do have to allow for other questions.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to ask the member for Surrey—Newton about the matter of delay, because the hybridization of offences is purported to be related to the need to deal with the backlog in Canada's courts and the Jordan decision. In Jordan, the Supreme Court determined that delay is deemed presumptively unreasonable between the laying of charges and the conclusion of trial for matters before a superior court after 30 months, versus 18 months before matters before provincial court.

How does the hybridization of offences deal with the backlog in Canada's courts? What it will ultimately do is reduce the time by nearly in half, backlogging cases onto the provinces and provincial courts, which in my estimation will result in more cases being thrown out, rather than fewer.

● (2240)

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Madam Speaker, when it comes to the hon. member's question about hybridization, we are putting this system in place to speed up the justice system. The crown has a tendency of picking up the more serious cases, and to pick up the stream. It has to have a triage system. That is how this will become a faster system. Instead, the more serious crimes are waiting in line and are taking longer.

This is what the Supreme Court wants and it is why we are bringing in this system. This system will be more efficient and bring justice to the victims.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will share my time with the hon. member for Ottawa South.

[*English*]

One of the joys of being the chairman of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights is the collegial way that we work together, which is the way we should work together when it comes to the justice system, because whether we are Liberals, Conservatives, New Democrats, or Green, we all want the same things: We want a system that moves quickly; we want a system under which the accused has the right to a fair trial and is presumed innocent; we want a system that protects the rights of victims and treats victims with respect; and we want a system that ensures that we are not soft on crime but that allows for rehabilitation of an offender.

These are all elements that we need to consider as we deal with Bill C-75, a very important bill that deals with not only the Jordan decision but a number of elements that need to be enhanced and improved within the justice system.

I want to talk about some of the elements of the bill, ones that we will need to study at the justice committee. I will start with the issue of preliminary inquiries.

Parliament was invited to look at the issue of preliminary inquiries by the Supreme Court in the Jordan case itself. Due to the vast disclosure requirements now required in preliminary inquiries, the court mentioned in Regina v. Jordan that Parliament may wish to revisit the issue of preliminary inquiries, and the bill would do away with preliminary inquiries for all those offences that do not carry life sentences.

In general, I do agree with the proposal to drastically reduce the number of preliminary inquiries. It is clear that there is no constitutional right to a preliminary inquiry. That does not mean, of course, that we do not need to consider arguments that may be made by defence counsel and those there to defend the rights of the accused, so one of the issues the justice committee will need to study is whether the list of offences for which there could be a preliminary inquiry should be expanded or should be left as it is in the bill.

Another issue that we will need to study is the issue of hybrid offences. I have heard the arguments made by my colleague from St. Albert—Edmonton on hybrid offences and on the possibility that sending offences to a provincial court with a shorter time frame under Jordan will clog up the justice system even more. I do not think it will. Doing away with certain administrative offences and reducing the volume for the court in that sense will not be problematic, but I hear that argument, and we will have to look at the list of offences that are now only indictable but that would become available for summary conviction as well, and we will need to determine whether any offences that are currently on the list to be hybridized should not be hybridized.

One of the issues that is very important for all Canadians is the over-incarceration of certain populations in this country. My colleague from Victoria, the NDP justice critic, today raised at our committee the fact that 25% of jailed people in Canada are indigenous, and among women in prison it is 33%. Since this community makes up approximately 5% of Canada's population, this is a shocking situation and it needs to be fixed. As for the other vulnerable populations that are overrepresented in the prison population, we need to diagnose why that is.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands raised the issue of mandatory minimums. That is certainly an issue that we will need to look at in depth at some point in time, because clearly mandatory minimums are one of the reasons for overrepresentation. Another reason, though, that I do believe is dealt with by the bill in a way that I totally support is the issue of creating a new judicial referral hearing that allows people who miss a condition not to automatically be charged and sent before a court, which creates a vicious cycle in which people who, for example, miss a hearing because they do not have transportation to get to the bail hearing are then incarcerated again because they have breached a condition, and it happens over and over. I totally approve of the issue of modernizing and streamlining the bail system and legislating a principle of restraint.

Another issue we need to look at is reverse onus. I do support the presumption that those people who have already been convicted of intimate-partner violence should have a more difficult time making bail. However, I understand that there are charter issues to be raised in terms of any reverse onus of proof that we create, and that is another item that our justice committee will have to study when this bill comes before us after second reading and a vote by Parliament.

Another issue I want to talk about is amending the Youth Criminal Justice Act to reduce the rates at which youth are charged for administration of justice offences.

● (2245)

One of the things that has worked really well in Canada since the Young Offenders Act was revised in the early 2000s is the fact that we have drastically reduced the number of youth incarcerated in Canada. This is something we need to look at, not only for young offenders but for all offenders. We need to find a way to keep people out of the vicious cycle of prisons. We need to find a way to make sure people can stay in their communities and be rehabilitated, as much as possible.

While I have a minute, I also want to turn my attention to the sections that will be repealed in the Criminal Code.

Section 230 of the Criminal Code, which was originally dealt with in Bill C-39, is now present in Bill C-75. This is a very unfortunate section that the courts have struck down, and in the case of the McCanns, which my hon. colleague, the member for St. Albert—Edmonton, has raised on multiple occasions, the judge erroneously referenced this section, causing even more pain for the family. One of the items that we need to make sure of is that those provisions of the Criminal Code that are struck down by our courts are repealed from the Criminal Code so that nobody else could ever make that type of mistake.

I also want to draw attention to section 159 of the Criminal Code, which desperately needs to be removed. The stigmatization of the gay community through section 159, the distinction between anal sex and other types of sex, and the stigmatization of gay men by a different age of consent is totally unacceptable, totally out of date, and needs to be repealed.

One of the things that I am very proud of is that the government, in bringing forward Bill C-75, has talked to all of its provincial counterparts, has held round tables throughout the country, and has not come back with its own ideas but has come back with lots of good principles that were worked on by multiple parties.

Now it is up to us as a Parliament to further enhance the bill, and for the committee to do its good work in terms of carefully looking at each of the provisions. I am very gratified that my colleagues in the other parties have agreed that we will sit extra hours when needed to deal with these provisions and to hear all the witnesses. I want to encourage those witnesses across Canada who have comments on Bill C-75 to come forward, send their briefs to committee, and ask to appear before our committee should they have a reason to do so. The more people we hear from on these important issues, the better the law will be. The goal for all of us is to get this bill as right as possible.

**Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have a question, and I really do not know whether you will have an answer or not.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I remind the member to address the Chair and not the individual member.

**Mr. Wayne Stetski:** I will do it sideways. As a question for you, I was in court with a constituent recently—

**Some hon. members:** It is question for the member.

**Mr. Wayne Stetski:** The question is for the member, absolutely.

I was in a court with a constituent recently, and the woman ahead of us was standing before the judge. She was charged with two counts of shoplifting. The judge said to her, "I haven't seen you for a while. You've lost a lot of weight." She said, "Yes, Your Honour, I've lost about 80 pounds. I'm starving. I'm trying to live on disability of about $900 a month."

She had shoplifted in a food store in Cranbrook and she had shoplifted some clothing from a Walmart store. The judge said, "I understand your taking the food, but I don't understand why you stole the clothes." She said, "My other clothes wouldn't fit, Your Honour. I lost 80 pounds." The judge looked at her and said, "I don't know what to do with you."

Could the member tell us if there is anything in this legislation that would help the judge decide what to do in situations like that?

● (2250)

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for the compassion that he showed to that woman. Clearly it is a woman who desperately needs help.

Under this bill, that would be an offence that would go for summary conviction. The judge has discretion today already as to what to do with respect to that type of an offence, when she is charged with a summary offence. She could theoretically be fined and not be put in prison at all.

However, this bill, in certain circumstances, would give greater latitude to not charge somebody, but I do not think it would apply in the case of shoplifting.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I was astounded this afternoon when the Minister of Justice said with respect to sentencing that the hybridization of offences was a matter of determining what a prosecutor determined was appropriate in the circumstances.

Could the hon. member for Mount Royal, who is a great chair of our justice committee, comment on when he thinks it is appropriate that offences such as kidnapping a minor, promoting genocide, or promoting and participating in a terrorist organization would result appropriately in a sentence of a mere fine or a maximum sentence of two years less a day, compared to the maximum sentence of 10 years currently provided for under the Criminal Code as an indictable offence?

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** Madam Speaker, the distinction here would be, theoretically, that if a prosecutor chooses to charge somebody under a summary offence as opposed to an indictable one, the maximum sentence that could be levied by a judge would be far less. First of all, we would need to look at the decision of the prosecutor in that case. We would have to hope that the prosecutor would make the right decision based on the circumstances. The judge would then also have to do the same.

One of the things we will need to look at in committee is whether there are any sentences currently on the list to be hybridized that would shock the conscience of Canadians were they to be hybridized and no longer have that longer potential penalty, and to remove the discretion of a prosecutor to suggest a lower sentence. As my hon. colleague knows, I would note that in either case a judge could choose to give no sentence at all, even under an indictable offence.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

In regard to the notice I provided earlier in this place, I would like to clarify that it was concerning the proceedings at the the report stage, and the second and third reading stages of Bill C-59, An Act respecting national security matters.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I certainly appreciate the clarification.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Ottawa South.

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand this evening to speak to Bill C-75, which would amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other acts to address delays in the criminal justice system and increase criminal justice system efficiencies.

Delays in the criminal justice system significantly impact all of those involved. Under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, accused persons have the right to be tried within a reasonable time. Should an accused not be tried in a reasonable time, it could result in a stay of proceedings in accordance with new timelines imposed by the Supreme Court in 2017 in its landmark Jordan decision.

Stays of proceedings due to delays undermine public confidence in the criminal justice system. These stays are unacceptable and as parliamentarians, we must step up to address this problem, which is why we have introduced Bill C-75.

The challenge of delays is particularly acute for indigenous persons and individuals from vulnerable populations, such as those suffering from mental health or addiction issues, who are over-represented in the criminal justice system.

While the volume and severity of crime have decreased over the years, criminal court cases are becoming more complex and trials are taking longer to complete. Data from Statistics Canada shows that the median case completion time in adult courts has increased from 120 days in 2010-11 to 127 days in 2015-16, a full week.

Another important challenge is the number of individuals in provincial detention facilities awaiting trial, which currently exceeds the number of individuals found guilty of criminal offences in serving their sentence.

Statistics Canada recently reported that the remand population had exceeded the sentence population, with adults in remand accounting for 60% of the custodial, that is federal, provincial, and territorial, population in 2015-16.

Bill C-75 includes amendments that would streamline and modernize the bail process, while maintaining public confidence in the criminal justice system. This would reduce the high population in remand, while ensuring our communities would be kept safe.

The bill would expand bail conditions that police would be able to impose on an accused, which would enable their release at an earlier stage and would reduce time spent in custody before their trial. These conditions, however, would be guided by a principle of restraint for police and prosecutors. A principle of restraint means that release at the earliest opportunity will be favoured over detention and that only reasonable and necessary bail conditions are to be imposed on the accused.

As well, Canadian criminal courts process a high number of administration of justice offences, such as breach of bail conditions and failures to appear in court. This volume of cases is bringing increased pressure on the entire system. These less serious offences often involve minor matters that do not compromise public safety or cause economic harm, for example, breach of curfew, but catch the offenders within the criminal justice system if they are charged for their breach.

Statistics Canada again reported that in 2013-14, 39% of all cases in adult criminal courts included at least one administration of justice offence. That is almost 40%. For many offenders, being unnecessarily charged and convicted of administration of justice offences is a fast track to the revolving door of the criminal justice system. This is costly in both economic and human terms and it is avoidable.

With a view to decrease the number of these charges taking up so much court time, Bill C-75 proposes to increase police and prosecutorial discretion for administration of justice offences involving both adults and our youth. The bill would give police and prosecutors a new tool called a judicial referral hearing, which serves as an alternative to a formal criminal charge.

● (1255)

For example, after being stopped by police after curfew, the police could decide to charge the accused with breach of conditions, or decide not to charge and do no more, or could use the new tool and refer the accused to a judicial referral hearing. However, the judicial referral hearing would only be available if the breach had not caused harm to a victim, and would take into account circumstances of the accused.

At a judicial referral hearing, a judge or justice could decide, for example, to take no action and release the accused on the same conditions, or release the accused after varying bail conditions, or, yet again, order that the accused be detained in custody. It does provide additional flexibility.

This new process seeks to reduce the high number of administration of justice offences that are clogging our system, which represent 40% of cases, while maintaining public safety.

As I mentioned, the overrepresentation of indigenous persons and individuals from vulnerable populations, such as those suffering from mental health issues or addiction issues, is a serious issue in our criminal justice, and it has been for decades.

When I began my career as a young criminal lawyer, it became clear to me very quickly the extent to which mental health and addiction problems were the lion's share of the client base in the firm at which I was practising.

In 2015-16, Statistics Canada reported that indigenous adults represented 28% of admissions to federal custody and 27% of admissions to provincial or territorial custody, while representing only 4.1% of the Canadian adult population. That represents a proportion of about seven to eight times higher than their proportion in the general population.

The overrepresentation is even more pronounced among indigenous women and youth. Similarly overrepresented are individuals suffering from mental health issues or substance abuse problems. Again, Statistics Canada reported that in 2012, of the 2.8 million Canadians aged 15 and older that reported at least one mental or substance use disorder, such as depression, anxiety, alcohol or drug abuse, or drug or alcohol dependence, one in three, which is 34%, reported coming into contact with police for at least one reason in the 12 months preceding the survey. That is an extraordinarily high number. Those Canadians who reported a mental or substance use disorder were about four times more likely than those without a disorder to report being arrested by the police.

Currently, in the bail process, the conditions imposed on the accused should be the least onerous and only what is necessary and reasonable. The principle of restraint in Bill C-75 would limit the circumstances in which conditions prohibiting the consumption of drugs or alcohol would be imposed.

This is an important measure because it will help alleviate the disproportionate impact of the criminal justice system on those living with addiction. Police or courts will impose a condition only if the condition is reasonable, considering the offence that they are alleged to have committed, if the condition is necessary to ensure the safety and security of any victim, and if the officer feels they will be able to comply with this condition.

In short, there are many other reforms in Bill C-75 that would help transform our criminal justice system. It is important for hon. members here tonight to consider the bill as a whole and not to view any component in isolation, and to remember that these questions can and must be taken to the Standing Committee on Justice to review, poke, prod, and explore probatively so as to improve the bill. These changes would ensure that the rights of both victim and accused would be protected, while maintaining public safety as a paramount principle.

Overall the bill aims to establish a criminal justice system that will best serve the Canadian public. I urge all members on all sides of the House to support the proposed legislation.

● (2300)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if there is any sign from the government that the bill will receive due consideration and will not be rushed through committee. I heard the hon. member for Mount Royal say a moment ago that there was an invitation to encourage people to be witnesses.

Recently, and particularly on the omnibus bill, Bill C-69, we went through rushed hearings during which we could not hear from many witnesses and we could not debate all the amendments during clause-by-clause consideration.

I will not go through the many examples of that, but could the member assure the House that the bill will be thoroughly studied? We are at second reading. I think we can all agree that it does some good things, but it needs a lot of work. Is that possible at this point? I thank the member for any light he can shine on that process question.

**Hon. David McGuinty:** Madam Speaker, as we all know in the House, committees are masters of their own destiny. It really is a question for the membership of the justice committee as a whole to decide pace, to decide extent of consultation, and to come together in a subcommittee to approve witness lists.

I have every confidence that under the guidance of our colleague, the chair of the justice committee, this will be given a very close examination. It is part and parcel of the Minister of Justice's mandate to ensure these kinds of reforms are very thoughtful and they take into consideration all of the relevant arguments.

● (2305)

**Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I know the member for Ottawa South's contributions on this very important legislation are informed by his experience as a lawyer who worked in the criminal justice system for a number of years. Could he elaborate on the importance of addressing mental health issues throughout the criminal justice process? I know he spoke about this, but could he take a few moments to expand on the need for the courts and all role players within the justice system to quickly identify mental health as a factor to prevent ongoing recidivism and reoffence in the conveyor belt of unnecessary systemic over-incarceration when we could rehabilitate those individuals so they could be positive contributing members to society?

**Hon. David McGuinty:** Madam Speaker, it has been known now for perhaps a decade or more that for every dollar we spend on criminal prevention in getting to what they call now the new squeeze age of 10 to 12-years-old with homework clubs, with sports activities, dealing with mental health challenges, addictions, and substance abuse, we save $40 at the back end in the administration of justice costs, incarceration, parole, and beyond.

The question of mental health arriving in the criminal justice system has arrived with a vengeance. We know this is a fundamental part of the challenge we have now moving forward. Therefore, we need to make room to deal with the reality of mental health challenges. We need to work with our police forces.

Most police officers I meet and deal with on the front line, who are community police officers, will tell me they spend now 60% to 70% of their time effectively working as psychologists and as social workers. They are asking for more training and more capacity to deal with mental health challenges.

This has arrived. I know the member has been working on this. It permeates Bill C-75. I know it is part and parcel of the Minister of Justice's understanding of the justice system in its entirely, even when it applies, for example, to the employment of justices. She understands the importance of ensuring those judges understand the role of mental health in the whole system.

We are making progress. Collectively, the House can make some great advances at committee to get better legislation and a justice system that reflects the reality of those challenges.

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Calgary Shepard.

Bill C-75 is an enormous 302-page omnibus bill that includes major reforms to our criminal justice system. This is the second large bill that has been proposed by the Liberals. Under the proposed changes, many serious offences may be prosecuted by summary conviction and thus will result in lighter sentences.

I would like to spend much of my time talking about human trafficking and what it looks like in Canada.

First, I would like to talk a little about the government's record. The human trafficking offences are being changed a bit by this bill. I have addressed this issue many times in this place already. Modern-day slavery and human trafficking are a horrific form of injustice. They are extremely profitable. They are growing in Canada and around the world, and are probably taking place within 10 blocks of where we live.

We know the vast majority of human victims in Canada are female and young. While those most at risk include indigenous women and youth, teenage runaways, and children who are in protection, we know anyone can become a victim of human trafficking.

Sadly, the government has been in power for 30 months, and never has a government done anything so little to fight human trafficking in so much time. Every time I have asked the government what it is doing, its only response is that it is reviewing the Criminal Code. We know that fighting complex and clandestine crimes, like human trafficking and modern-day slavery, require more than just changes to the Criminal Code. They require vigorous development and application of policy.

Since coming to power, the Liberals have done little to fight against human trafficking, and they have allowed the fight to languish. The Liberals allowed the national action plan to combat human trafficking to expire and they made no effort to replace it. It is not that they did not have the time or were not prepared, they could have announced an extension or launched a new one. However, they let it lapse, becoming one of the few developed countries that no longer has a comprehensive plan to eliminate human trafficking.

The Liberals ended federal funding to NGOs that provided support and options for victims of human trafficking. They blocked important tools that were adopted in the House over five years ago. Then the Liberals introduced legislation in Bill C-38 to lighten sentences for sex traffickers. The contents of Bill C-38 are now in Bill C-75.

It was not until budget 2018 that the Liberals finally addressed human trafficking and committed to funding the national hotline and a referral mechanism. While I applaud this, and it is important, it is long overdue.

I also want to recognize the fact that the announcement came after the Canadian Centre To End Human Trafficking, which is a great Canadian NGO, partnered with an American NGO, the Polaris project, to launch the official Canadian hotline. After it was public that Canada's national hotline was supported and funded by the United States, the government stepped in to offer support to it.

In 2011, the Conservative government became the first and only party to include a campaign promise in its platform to end human trafficking. Specifically, the Conservative Party committed to developing and launching the Canadian national action plan to combat human trafficking.

On June 6, 2012, only 13 months after the election, the Conservative Party launched its four-year national action plan to combat human trafficking. The primary goals of the national action plan were focused around the four Ps, prevention, prosecution, protection and partnerships, and included launching Canada's first integrated law enforcement team dedicated to combatting human trafficking; increasing front-line training to identify and respond to human trafficking and enhance prevention in vulnerable communities; providing more support for victims of this crime, both Canadians and newcomers; and strengthening coordination with domestic and international partners that contributed to Canada's efforts to combat human trafficking.

It is also worth noting that the Conservative Party was the only party in 2015 committed to fighting human trafficking, with its promise to establish new RCMP human trafficking teams in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary and Winnipeg, at an annual cost of $8 million for five years, and to renew the national plan to combat human trafficking for five years at a cost of $20 million.

● (2310)

Here we are today. It has been two years since the national action plan has expired under the current government and, interestingly, in December, the government's own Department of Public Safety quietly released a report called "The 2016-17 Horizontal Evaluation of the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking". I want to share with the House what the report said. It stated:

> There is a continuing need to have a National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking in order to consolidate federal initiatives, for federal organizations to partner together, and to strengthen accountability;
>
> Prior to the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, each federal organization conducted its own anti-human trafficking initiatives. The National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking consolidated federal initiatives to combat human trafficking under one plan;
>
> The National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking is required to meet Canada's ongoing international commitments to combat human trafficking;

That means without one, we are not even fighting human trafficking at the same level as other countries. It further states, "There are opportunities for the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking to evolve." The department was preparing to help the government develop and advance further action items to combat human trafficking.

Human trafficking is an extremely profitable crime that preys on young and vulnerable Canadians, especially in indigenous communities. Police officers and NGOs across Canada work incredibly hard to end human trafficking and help victims, but their resources are strained. Many hours go into this, and a lot of their own time. They are asking for federal support and leadership. As I mentioned earlier, the Conservative government committed $25 million over four years to build on and strengthen Canada's significant work to date to prevent, detect, and prosecute human traffickers. The Liberal government allowed that plan to expire in 2016 and, with it, critical funding for victims of human trafficking and law enforcement. Many organizations appeared at the justice committee's study on human trafficking and urged the government to renew its national action plan.

When the Minister of Justice introduced Bill C-38 in February, she misled Canadians and the House by claiming that it had tools for police and prosecutors to combat human trafficking. Bill C-38 was only one paragraph and it is now included within Bill C-75. Let me be clear that the changes proposed by the minister, first in Bill C-38 and now in Bill C-75, have no provisions whatsoever to give police and prosecutors new tools to investigate human trafficking. However, the tools that Liberals pretend are in Bill C-38 and Bill C-75 were, in fact, unanimously adopted by the House over five years ago in an NDP private member's bill, Bill C-452.

Bill C-452 was supported by a Conservative government and voted for by the current Prime Minister. It was Bill C-452 that contained provisions to provide tools to police and prosecutors. It created a presumption with respect to the exploitation of one person by another, added the offence of trafficking in persons to the list of offences to which the reverse onus forfeiture of proceeds of crime provisions applied, and it corrected a technical discrepancy and included a provision that human trafficking sentences be served consecutively.

Bill C-452 received royal assent in June 2015 and when the Liberal government came to power, it blocked that bill from coming into force. Why? It is because the Liberals do not like the idea that sex traffickers might face consecutive sentences. They feel it is too harsh to expect that a child trafficker could serve a long sentence for exploiting a minor in sex slavery. The only thing the proposed amendments would do in Bill C-75 is prevent sex traffickers from receiving consecutive sentences. That is it. It does nothing more. This certainly does not help the police.

Eighty per cent of the victims of human trafficking never come forward out of fear. All of the human trafficking investigators who testified on Bill C-452 welcomed the consecutive sentences and highlighted that long sentences gave victims the confidence to come forward and testify. They also pointed out that without consecutive sentences, a pimp who trafficks one minor would receive the same sentence as a pimp who trafficks five or 10 minors. Consecutive sentences allow for punishments that better reflect the gravity of the offence.

When will the government stop misleading the public about its intentions with this bill, when will it stop blocking important tools for the police, and when will the Liberals stand up for victims of sex trafficking rather than blocking tough sentences for those who enslave them?

● (2315)

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to hear from the member on this particular piece of proposed legislation. It is a combination of three other justice bills, namely Bill C-28, the victims surcharge bill; Bill C-38, the exploitation and trafficking in persons bill, which I know the member has a great interest in, as he has formed a bipartisan group of legislators in the House to study the issue much more deeply; and Bill C-39, the unconstitutional provisions bill.

I would like the member speak on the fact that the bill is a few hundred pages of what would otherwise be considered an omnibus justice bill, as it combines different parts of the justice system into one bill.

Does the bill speak to the failure of the Liberals to push forward reforms in our justice system in a meaningful way and in a reasonable time line?

**Mr. Arnold Viersen:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the great question, and the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for listening so intently to my speech. I know that she very much loves it when I speak in the House of Commons, and I appreciate her audience here this evening as well.

To the point about the particular bill before us, it is 302 pages long. It would reduce sentences for over 27 different heinous crimes. When I look at the bill, I see kind of a mad scramble to do something. As I said in my speech, within 13 months of the Conservative government's coming into power, we had passed the national action plan to end human trafficking. It was something that was a priority and therefore we did it.

The bill before us would do nothing more to reduce the backlogs in the justice system than just reduce sentencing, which I do not see as going to speed up anything whatsoever.

● (2320)

**Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member just stated something that I do not believe is accurate, and I just want to get his comment on it.

The bill deals with many things that actually would increase efficiencies in the justice system. One very important one is dealing with the administration of justice offences, which clog up a great deal of time in our courts and do not focus the resources of the court on dealing with the actual serious offence, the subject that brought an offender to court.

I wonder if my friend would at least agree that the administration of justice provisions in this bill would help increase efficiencies, and that it has nothing to do with the sentencing he was just talking about.

**Mr. Arnold Viersen:** Madam Speaker, when I look at the bill, I definitely see a significant list of offences for which sentencing is being significantly reduced. For example, prison breach, punishment for infanticide, concealing the body of a child, abduction of a person under the age of 16, abduction of a person under the age of 14, forced marriage, extortion by libel, advocating genocide, participating in the activities of a criminal organization, and advertising and dealing in counterfeit money. These are just a few of the things that I have on my list that the bill deals with. I have a list of over 27 things the bill would significantly reduce sentencing for.

If the member thinks that the bill would not reduce these things, we could have put the things he is concerned about in a separate bill. However, when I look at the bill, it looks like a hug-a-thug bill.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be joining this debate at this late hour on behalf of my constituents of Calgary Shepard, and I want to thank the member for Peace River—Westlock for the intervention he made and for his exposition on the problem of human trafficking in Canada. It is usually a crime and an activity that we think about in the context of international human trafficking.

I know that oftentimes when looking at the International Justice Mission and other not-for-profit organizations that are trying to fight against international human trafficking, it is easy to forget that it happens right here in Canada as well, and it is a problem in our communities. I know that there was a former member of this House, Joy Smith, who did quite a bit of work on the subject. She will be putting out a book on it very soon.

It is a problem here, and we should think of it in the domestic context. Whenever we make changes to the criminal justice system, we should be ensuring that issues like human trafficking are not reduced and that we do not send a signal to individuals in our communities that they will possibly face a lighter sentence at the end of the day for this type of activity if they are convicted of it.

I asked a previous question about Bill C-75. I listened attentively to many interventions and speeches in the House, and I listened to the member for Mount Royal when he went through a list of potential issues that the justice committee could look at, if and when this particular piece of legislation is sent there. I thought he did a very good job of presenting some of the issues that different members of the House had brought forward.

I listened attentively to the member for Eglinton—Lawrence as well when he gave the government's position and presented what the government believes is the upside of the bill. Obviously his role here is to present the best possible case on this particular piece of legislation, and not to present the potential defects or downsides of the bill. That is all right, because that is really the job of opposition members and those individuals who have differences with the content of the bill.

It has been said that some of the portions of the bill are specific to how offences will be treated in the lower courts. What I am talking about is how some offences will be hybridized and how most hybridized indictable offences will be punishable by a maximum penalty of 10 years or less. It will increase the default maximum penalty for two years less a day of imprisonment for summary conviction offences and extend the limitation period for summary conviction offences to 12 months. Several members of the opposition, members of the Conservative Party, have discussed how this hybridization, this transferring to offences that would carry a lower sentence that a person could face if convicted, is the wrong way to go.

I believe deeply that the list of offences, 27 of them, that could be reduced in terms of the maximum time a person could face in jail is the wrong way to go. I have a few of them that I am going to mention. I will not read the whole list. They include obstructing or violence to or arrest of officiating clergyman; concealing the body of a child; infanticide; impaired driving offences causing bodily harm, including impaired driving causing bodily harm; blood alcohol over legal limit—bodily harm; failure or refusal to provide sample—bodily harm; and abduction of a person under the age of 16 and 14.

The list goes on, but this gives a feel for the types of offences that are being modified or are proposed to be modified in this piece of legislation by the government.

Thus, I have a difference of opinion. I think the House should be setting a pretty high bar on what prosecutors and judges can consider in punishing those individuals that they convict of the offence. I do not think two years less a day or two years and under is the right way to go.

We have heard from others, and I address these issues as a layperson. Of course, as I said, I am not a lawyer. I say this often at committees. I am neither a lawyer nor an accountant. I am not bothered by considerations of 20 years. I just look at it as most Canadians would look at it. If individuals are alleged to have committed a certain crime, what is it that they are going to be facing? I look at it as an outsider looking in on the judicial system.

When I look at an offence like concealing the body of a child, I think that is quite serious. I think a person convicted of such an offence should face many, many years in jail as a deterrent, as a form of punishment, and also as an opportunity, I think, for rehabilitation in jail. I have said it before in this House, and I said again just a few days ago that I believe our prison system should be focused more on rehabilitation. There is a patchwork of success in the United States. Every single state there has a different system when it comes to rehabilitating their prisoners, and that is the case in the European model as well. I do not know if we have struck the right balance in Canada, but it is something that absolutely is worth looking at.

● (2325)

It has been said in the House that prosecutors and judges will be able to decide what type of offence they will go after, whether they will go for an indictable offence or a summary conviction in these types of cases.

I believe the House should indicate what the minimum sentence should be for these types of offences, and I do not mean the minimum sentence on these cases. I simply mean the up to 10 years in jail should be the upper bar. It would be our direction to prosecutors and judges on the seriousness of the offence being considered by them instead of this hybrid model.

This legislation is over 300 pages long. I just want to go back to that for a moment as well. Those of us who are not practised in law, who do not have a deep background of many years of service on justice committee, will obviously struggle to consider the finer points of what will happen.

We set the Criminal Code. We in the House determine the contents of the Criminal Code, but provincial governments operate the provincial courts. They appoint a lot of judges themselves. They operate the court houses. They have quite a large role to play in that administration.

Police officers enforce the law, but they do not run the judicial system in the courts. Those two are separate. One sets policy and one is the administrative arm of the activity.

Our provincial governments are stressed. They are stressed with respect to the public treasury. They have a difficult time financing public services, but they also have a difficult time finding new judges. The federal government has struggled with this as well.

There have been federal judiciary vacancies. Forgive me for using an older statistic, but as of April 1, there were 59 vacancies. Appointing more federal judges, appointing more provincial judges, and ensuring courthouse space is available will allow for faster prosecution of criminals and alleged criminals. Those who will be proven innocent will be let go.

As right as that is, we need to ensure people have appropriate access to our judicial system. It is not just about judges, it is not just about having the right laws; it is also important to have the necessary court space for cases to be heard.

I mentioned yesterday in the House that Calgary had a gang problem, not just the FOB gang but many others. The FOB gang leader was let go just a few weeks ago, partly because of the Jordan decision, partly because he could not get his hearing on time, and partly because he could not appear before a judge. Delays were built in by his lawyer, who did his job in defending his client, but he could not get his client in front of a judge to be prosecuted for his alleged crimes. He was out on bail as well, and this is another issue.

We have a revolving door for career criminals. This is a serious issue in our communities. These people commit new crimes, especially organized crime.

One charge that will be modified under the proposed legislation is participation in a criminal organization. I have serious problems with this. We should be doing more to ensure career criminals are put away. Part of that involves ensuring they face up to 10 years in jail. It is the multiplicity, the series of criminal acts, that sends them back to jail.

The arresting officer in the case of the FOB gang leader arrested him on a lower charge. There were litany of other offences for which he was going to be charged. The issue was finding him, stopping him, and arresting him so he could face justice. That is the problem.

I do not see the right focus in Bill C-75 at this time. I just do not see us going after the right things. The government claims that this legislation would give us better access to the judicial system, that it would improve things, that it would speed things up.

I love Yiddish proverbs. I always use them in the House. Here is another one "Better an honest slap in the face than an insincere kiss." It is an older Yiddish proverb but it is quite a good one. I would rather the Government of Canada just come clean. I know it is an unusual Yiddish proverb, but the government should just come clean. If the goal of the legislation is to give lighter offences for certain types of criminals, then the government should just say so, and do so. If the goal of the legislation is to download to the provincial courts, then it should just say so, and do so.

● (2330)

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the member what he thinks about the jury selection items in the bill.

First, I want to make a comment. I want to make sure that the public is aware, and I am a layperson, too. There seems to be some indication that some people think that this would reduce the maximum sentences. There is nothing in this bill that reduces maximum sentences. The judges still have access to all the same maximum sentences, and they still have access to indictment. In fact, certain summary offence penalties have actually increased.

My question is related to jury selection. Peremptory challenges are proposed to be removed. For the person in the street, a peremptory challenge means that when people line up to be jurors, the defence lawyer or the prosecutor can say, "Oh, I don't like that one" and throw them out for no reason at all. Does that sound like natural justice? This has been an issue for decades. It is being removed, and that could actually be used to increase diversity.

Also in the bill is that judges can stand aside certain jurors to obtain diversity, and they can decide on challenges for cause, to make sure that if the defence or the prosecutor is suggesting that someone leave for a certain cause, the judge can decide on that.

I think these are improvements, but I would like to hear the member's thoughts on these proposed changes.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Mr. Speaker, I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the member for Yukon at the procedure and House affairs committee. I hope it will be very short from now until the end of June. That is my hope, and I am sure it is the member's hope as well.

On peremptory challenges, the member makes an interesting point that it is an attempt to get more diversity in our jury system. Diversity is important, but I always try to go back to the fact that people should be tried by a jury of their peers, as much as possible. When people are accused of a crime, the entire weight of the judicial system is standing against them. They truly are in an unfortunate position. If they have committed the crime, it will hopefully end with a just sentence being applied to them, a just outcome of the court trial. Diversity is important, but I do not think we can lose track of the fact that our goal should be achieving a trial where people are facing their peers and are able to know that their peers will understand where they are coming from, understand their particular situation.

How diversity plays into that is an interesting point. I have read portions of the bill, but I am not certain that the government has struck the right balance in it.

● (2335)

**Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, like Saul on the road to Damascus, I was glad to hear my hon. colleague say that the Conservative Party should be more focused on rehabilitation. I encourage him to speak to his colleagues who were here when the Conservatives formed the last government, which woefully and insufficiently funded legal aid and victims funding; cut programs that promoted rehabilitation for offenders trying to get back on the right track while serving their time; systematically introduced legislation that stripped away the independence and discretion of the courts to impose proper and fit sentencing; and made it harder to get parole and to get pardons.

If justice is what the member seeks, I encourage him to speak to his colleagues, because that is the way they can restore justice.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I noticed that the member is still very much focused on the past, on what has happened before.

However, as the parliamentary secretary, the member should be defending the bill, not focusing on what happened in the previous 10 years. The contents of the bill is what is important. I do not see how this is connected to pardons. I do not see how the bill is directly connected to seeing an individual pardoned by civic society for actions taken in the past.

I know many individuals with criminal convictions who have reformed and are contributing members of society today. They were tried and convicted, and they served their time in jail first. It is where they found an opportunity to pay back society and then sought rehabilitation themselves. A person has to want to find that in order to achieve it.

**Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wish to advise you that I will be sharing my time with the outstanding member for Niagara Centre.

I am very pleased to speak to Bill C-75. This legislation seeks, among other things, the streamline the criminal justice system and reduce case completion time.

[*Translation*]

Today I want to talk about Bill C-75's provisions on preliminary inquiries.

[*English*]

Currently, after an accused is charged with an indictable offence and they elect to be tried before a superior court, the accused or the crown can request a preliminary inquiry before a justice of the provincial court.

[*Translation*]

During the preliminary inquiry, the crown submits evidence and the accused may as well. The crown and the defence may cross-examine witnesses.

[*English*]

The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to commit an accused to trial. Preliminary inquiries have become a forum where the accused can discover the case against them, providing a candid forum for negotiation discussions and generating transcripts available at trial should a witness be unable to attend.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, there is no guilty or not guilty decision. Rather, the accused is either sent to trial or discharged, meaning no further action is taken. Under existing law, preliminary inquiry is not available in all circumstances. For example, it is not available for indictable offences under the absolute jurisdiction of the provincial court.

In light of the stringent crown disclosure obligations, the Supreme Court of Canada in a 2009 case, R. v. S.J.L., ruled that there is no constitutional right to a preliminary inquiry.

● (2340)

[*Translation*]

This process is not used the same way in all provinces and territories. Some jurisdictions, like New Brunswick, hold very few preliminary inquiries, while other jurisdictions, like Ontario, hold many. Furthermore, some jurisdictions, like Ontario and Quebec, have developed preliminary out-of-court examination procedures that complement, or, in some cases, replace, preliminary inquiries.

[*English*]

Under Bill C-75, the availability of preliminary inquiries would be restricted to the most serious offences punishable by life imprisonment, such as murder. Currently, preliminary inquiries consume significant time and resources due to scheduling issues, the complexity of the evidence, the number of witnesses to be heard, and/or issues to be resolved.

In its Jordan decision, the Supreme Court of Canada established strict time frames within which criminal cases must be completed, beyond which the delay would be presumptively unreasonable and cases would be stayed. The court also noted that Parliament should consider the value of preliminary inquires in light of expanded disclosure obligations.

Also, in its 2017 final report on delays, the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs took a similar view as the Supreme Court of Canada in Jordan by recommending that preliminary inquiries be restricted or eliminated.

[*Translation*]

On a number of occasions over the course of many years, reform of preliminary inquiries has been the topic of discussion and consultation, for example, at federal-provincial-territorial meetings.

Most recently, at their meeting in September 2017, the ministers pointed out that reforms were needed to limit the use of preliminary inquiries in the criminal justice system, since these inquiries can cause legal delays, and there are now other mechanisms that serve the same purpose.

[*English*]

Though these proposals clearly represent a significant change in how cases would be conducted, provincial and territorial justice ministers demanded bold reforms to bring about the transformation of the criminal justice system required to respond to the reality adopted in the Jordan decision, and our government took action. These bold reforms respond to calls not only from provincial and territorial justice ministers, but also from the Supreme Court of Canada and the Senate, acknowledging that transformative changes are required to bring about the change to the culture of complacency in regard to delays.

Bill C-75 would fulfill our mandate to improve the efficiency of the Canadian criminal justice system by limiting preliminary inquiries to the most serious offences. This move would reduce court backlogs and ensure that victims would receive the justice they deserve in a timely manner. As noted by the Minister of Justice, restricting the availability of this procedure to offences punishable by life imprisonment would reduce their number by 87%, according to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Restricting preliminary inquiries, as proposed in Bill C-75, would reduce demands on provincial court resources and would have more serious cases heard more expediently in superior court.

● (2345)

[*Translation*]

This bill would also give the justice of the peace presiding over the preliminary inquiry more powers to limit the questions to be examined and to reduce the number of witnesses heard as part of the inquiry.

[*English*]

As such, Bill C-75 would streamline the conduct of preliminary inquiries and would reduce the number of cases in which some witnesses would have to testify twice. These changes would reduce the re-victimization of vulnerable victims and witnesses, such as children, and would protect them from long-drawn-out proceedings.

Bill C-75 recognizes diverse views, from those who oppose any changes to the existing procedure to those who would completely eliminate this procedure. It would introduce a significant and bold response. Our balanced approach would maintain the preliminary-inquiry process for more complex and serious offences, where the jeopardy for the accused is the greatest.

These reforms would not impact trial fairness. Furthermore, the flexibility for existing processes, such as out-of-court discovery, implemented in Ontario and Quebec, would not be impacted and would remain a practical option.

[*Translation*]

These reforms would make the courts' use of time more efficient by getting rid of procedural steps that are unnecessary for less serious offences. The proposed restriction would not fundamentally change the nature of criminal trials in Canada or evidence requirements for a guilty verdict against someone with outstanding charges, nor would it change the crown's responsibility to prove all the necessary elements of an offence beyond a reasonable doubt.

[*English*]

Canadians expect our criminal justice process to be just, equitable, and expedient, to protect victims, and to hold offenders to account. These reforms, together with the other measures in Bill C-75, would help achieve these expectations. Bill C-75 would ensure that the accused's charter right to be tried within a reasonable time was respected and that those involved in criminal justice proceedings were not subject to protracted criminal proceedings. I urge all members to support Bill C-75.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, my question is in relation to the kind of consultation that went into this bill. I have raised a number of concerns. Primarily the concerns I have had in reading the bill myself have been echoed when I have looked at the commentary from members of the criminal bar, particularly the Criminal Lawyers' Association, which said that the association was not consulted at all. In bringing forward fundamental reforms to the criminal justice system, I would have thought that the members of the practising bar would have been part of a consultation process.

I wonder if the hon. member can tell me what will be done in committee to ensure that, rather belatedly, we hear from people who are doing this work day to day.

**Mr. Sean Casey:** Madam Speaker, I personally had a hand in the consultations that led to this bill. The hon. member would know that before becoming Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, I was parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice and personally attended round tables that included members of the criminal defence bar in multiple provinces and territories throughout the country. There has been extensive consultation. I was personally party to those extensive consultations. I am also, as a result of being in that role, acutely aware of the very thorough and comprehensive work that is routinely done by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in this place, and I have every confidence that no stone will be left unturned in the course of the committee review of this bill.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage who previously served as the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice, and who I think was justice critic in the opposition.

I want to ask him about the issue of delay and the Jordan decision. In that respect, the Supreme Court of Canada determined that delay is deemed presumptively unreasonable between the laying of charges and the conclusion of trial after 30 months versus 18 months at provincial court.

Bill C-75 hybridizes a lot of offences, potentially downloading a lot of cases to provincial courts, wherein the timeline is not 30 months, but 18 months. How does that deal with the issue of delay and minimize cases being thrown out of court?

● (2350)

**Mr. Sean Casey:** Madam Speaker, it is nice to be debating my friend from St. Albert—Edmonton on issues touching the justice file once more. I would say to my friend that he needs to look at the bill as a whole.

I just gave a speech that focused very much on the elimination and reduction of the need for preliminary inquiries. My friend would be acutely aware that preliminary inquiries are most often conducted at the provincial court level. This is one thing that will be taken off the plate at provincial courts.

The hybridization of offences will allow more plea bargains to take place. This will not only reduce the burden at provincial courts, but in many cases also dispense with the need for a trial.

There are multiple steps and measures being taken within the bill as a whole, the cumulative effect of which will be to reduce court delays throughout the system.

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in today's debate on Bill C-75 and to address more specifically those reforms that deal with juries. Hopefully, the comments I will make will answer some of the questions by the members opposite that my colleagues have been answering for the last little.

Juries are a cornerstone of our criminal justice system and are guaranteed as a right under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms for offences carrying a maximum penalty of five years or more under section 11(f). For some offences, such as murder and terrorism, there is a presumption that the accused will be tried by a judge and jury, and for other offences, such as robbery and sexual assault, an accused can elect to be tried by a judge alone or judge and jury.

Canada is a diverse country, underlined by a core value of respect. We should not expect anything less of our juries. The Supreme Court of Canada has noted that the jury acts as the conscience of the community and must in fact be a representative cross-section of society, and be honestly and fairly chosen.

The Supreme Court of Canada has also made it clear that a process that promotes a diverse jury furthers the confidence of the community, including the accused, victims, and the public at large, in the administration of justice. We know there is discrimination in our criminal justice system and, as a result, certain communities have different experiences in the system.

We know that we have to do better to address the problems that plague our system and have contributed to high rates of incarceration among indigenous persons and those suffering from mental health challenges or battling addictions. We also know that if the challenges are left unaddressed, confidence in the system will continue to be eroded. That is why the proposed jury reforms included in Bill C-75 are so important.

Canada's jury selection process has long been the subject of concern. Several reports have documented discrimination in the use of peremptory challenges. There is also a clear record of under-representation of indigenous persons and other minority groups on Canadian juries. Bill C-75 seeks to address these concerns through reforms to the in-court jury selection process, recognizing that laws governing jury selection exist at both the federal and provincial-territorial levels.

For example, Parliament has jurisdiction over the criminal law, including the rules in the Criminal Code governing jury trials and in-court jury selection, whereas the provinces and territories are responsible for legislation that governs matters such as the criteria of who may serve as a juror and the process by which the jury roll is prepared and compiled.

Bill C-75 respects the division of powers over juries and proposes to abolish peremptory challenges and give judges a greater role in the jury selection process. As many are likely aware, peremptory challenges give both the crown and defence counsel the ability to exclude potential jurors from participating in jury duty without having to provide a reason. Senator Murray Sinclair, in his earlier work on the 1991 report on the Manitoba aboriginal justice inquiry, documented the discriminatory use of peremptory challenges and recommended that they be abolished.

More recently, retired Supreme Court Justice Frank Iacobucci, in his 2013 report on first nation representation on Ontario juries, recommended that consideration be given to amending the Criminal Code to prohibit the discriminatory use of peremptory challenges. Similar calls for reform have been made by legal experts and advocacy groups, such as Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto.

Abolishing peremptory challenges would settle the concern that this aspect of the jury selection process may be used to discriminate unfairly against potential jurors and would strengthen public confidence in the jury selection process.

● (2355)

The proposed amendments will signal that discrimination of any kind, including through the use of peremptory challenges based on a hunch or based the way a potential juror looks at an accused, has no meaningful role in promoting fairness and impartiality in the criminal justice process.

I strongly support this proposed change and note that Canada will join countries like England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, which have also abolished peremptory challenges.

This bill would also amend the "stand aside" provision, which currently permits a judge to stand aside jurors for reasons of personal hardship or any other reasonable cause. This tool helps to ensure that potential jurors are impartial and capable of performing their duties if they are selected. Amendments will clarify that a judge can stand aside a juror to maintain public confidence in the administration of justice, a concept that is already used in other parts of the Criminal Code, and has been interpreted by the Supreme Court of Canada in R. v. St-Cloud, 2015, in the context of bail.

The use of this power would be context-specific, approached from the perspective of a properly informed public that understands the legislative provisions of the code, charter values, and the circumstances of any given case, and recognizes the important role judges can play in promoting a jury that is impartial, representative, and competent.

Bill C-75 would also modernize and streamline the challenge for cause process, including by empowering judges to decide all challenges for cause. The challenge for cause process is frequently used in jury trials as an important aspect of jury selection because it seeks to ensure that only eligible and impartial jurors are selected to try a case.

The proposed reforms address some long-standing concerns with the jury selection process in Canada and will help to increase the diversity of juries, while respecting the rights of the accused, maintaining public safety, and creating a criminal justice system that is fair, efficient, and equitable for all Canadians. I urge all members to support this legislation.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

● (2400)

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, this adjournment proceeding stems from a question I asked the Minister of Environment and Climate Change back on March 2. We had just heard reports that the High Arctic had seen record high temperatures, more than 30°C above normal, leading to melting ice in the middle of winter. Let us think about that: sea ice was melting in mid-winter near the North Pole when the sun was not shining. Something is clearly wrong with this picture.

We all know what is wrong with the picture. The climate is changing because we are putting too much carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Canada committed in Paris, with countries around the world, to keep global temperature change below 2° Celsius. Other countries have stepped up and done their bit. Many European countries have already met ambitious targets. However, the Liberal government chose to stick with the weak, inadequate targets set by the Harper government, and every analyst will tell us that Canada's action plan, if we can call it that, will not get us anywhere near even those targets.

The minister answered my question by saying that the government has brought in a national carbon pricing plan. I applaud the government for that. It is a good first step and might get us almost halfway there. The fact is that most Canadians were living under a carbon pricing plan before the federal government stepped up. In British Columbia, we have been living with a carbon tax for almost a decade.

The minister mentioned that many provinces have phased out or are in the process of phasing out coal. That is admirable and necessary as well. However, again, it was not the result of federal government action.

The minister also mentioned that we are saying the right things on the international stage. However, that will only work for so long, until Canada actually comes up with a plan to do the necessary work here at home. We cannot implore other countries to make deep cuts to their carbon emissions if we are not doing the same.

Last December, Canada's progress report to the UN showed that we will be 66 megatonnes short of our target by 2030, and that gap has doubled since the Liberals came to power. We are going in the wrong direction. Eighty percent of our emissions come from the transportation and the oil and gas industries, and now we have bought a 65-year-old leaky pipeline for eight times the cost that Kinder Morgan paid for it just a decade ago. How can the government square this with meeting our climate goals? How can the government square this with its promise to do away with subsidies for the fossil fuel industry? We are dealing with the low-hanging fruit right now, and getting to our 2050 target of an 80% reduction will be more difficult still.

I hear the government is trying to use land use and forestry carbon sequestration to fudge its own efforts. Whether this is allowed under the Paris Agreement is unknown, but I know that the Climate Action Tracker website states that such a move would change its assessment of the climate actions of Canada from "insufficient" to "highly insufficient."

The minister finished her answer by saying, "We are all in on climate action. We are serious. We owe it to our kids." When will the Liberals actually get serious and do what is necessary to fight climate change?

● (2405)

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Canada's first ministers adopted Canada's clean growth and climate plan in December 2016 to take ambitious action to fight climate change, to adapt and build resilience to the changing climate, and to drive clean economic growth.

A landmark achievement of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change is the first climate change plan in Canada's history to include joint and individual commitments by federal, provincial, and territorial governments and to have been developed with input from indigenous peoples.

[*Translation*]

The pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change lays out over 50 concrete measures to reduce carbon pollution, enhance our adaptation and resistance to the impact of climate change, and encourage the development of clean jobs that contribute to a strong economy.

[*English*]

We have been actively implementing the pan-Canadian framework, and we are starting to see results, putting Canada on the path to meet our Paris Agreement greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.

As published in December 2017 in Canada's third biennial report to the UNFCCC, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions are currently projected to be 583 megatonnes of CO2 in 2030, which is 232 megatonnes lower than what was projected in our second biennial report, which was released in early 2016. This decline in projected emissions is the biggest improvement in Canada's emissions outlook since reporting began, and it is widespread across all economic sectors, reflecting the breadth and depth of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change.

However, it is important to note that these projections do not account for expected emissions reductions in several other areas as a result of historically significant investments in public transit, where $20 billion is being invested to improve public transit infrastructure; extensive investments in clean technology and innovation that will promote clean growth and lead to new technologies to reduce emissions from industry and other sectors; and storage of carbon in forests, soils, and wetlands, which can be significant for a country the size of Canada.

[*Translation*]

These projections also do not reflect policies that may be adopted by federal, municipal, provincial and territorial governments by 2030.

Along with the provinces and territories, Canada is committed to reporting on and examining the results of these policies so we can become more ambitious over time. Once that process is complete, we may have identified other policies that will be needed in the future.

[*English*]

When the policies and programs within the pan-Canadian framework are fully implemented, they will not only allow Canada to meet its 2030 target in full but also position Canada to set and achieve deeper emission reduction targets beyond 2030, as is required by the Paris Agreement.

This government is firmly committed to addressing the threat of climate change. Canada has played a constructive role on the international stage. We have worked with provinces, territories, and indigenous peoples to develop a comprehensive and detailed plan that will ensure that we meet our Paris Agreement targets. We are firmly committed to actively fighting climate change and to creating and growing a clean growth economy.

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Madam Speaker, as the minister said, we need to go all in on climate action, electrification of our transport systems, energy retrofits, and home solar systems. Just think of what $4.5 billion would do there.

Ministers stand every day in the House and say loudly that this pipeline will be built and the economy and the environment go hand in hand. If the economy and the environment go hand in hand and this pipeline will be built, I would like to hear from the parliamentary secretary a firm promise that we will meet our 2030 Paris targets and would like to see the plan that will actually get us there.

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson:** Madam Speaker, the member and I have worked together productively on other files, and I have great respect for him.

We are very focused on achieving the 2030 target. That is absolutely a key focus of this government. We included all of the upstream emissions associated with the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion in the pan-Canadian framework to ensure that they were addressed in the context of Canada's plan to achieve its Paris reduction targets. In the pan-Canadian framework, we address issues around transportation and the electrification of transportation, the phase-out of coal, methane regulations, clean fuel standards to reduce the carbon content of the fuels that we use, building codes to improve energy efficiency, and a range of other measures. I certainly would encourage the member to have a look at that plan, because it plan will actually get us to our targets.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to follow up on a question I raised in the House of Commons on February 26 of this year. I also had a follow-up question on March 19. The question has to do with the unfair duties and tariffs that have been imposed on the Catalyst Paper Corporation and some pulp and paper operations across Canada. This has affected my particular riding quite severely because of the fact that we have a large mill in the Crofton area, which is a great small community in my riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

When I raised this issue on February 26, I noted the fact that earlier in the year, on January 8, the Department of Commerce in the United States had imposed a 6.09% countervailing duty deposit on exports of uncoated groundwood paper products. This was followed up in March by a 22.16% anti-dumping duty deposit on the company's exports of the same product.

When we add both of those up, Catalyst simply cannot survive with those duties, nor can any company. Indeed, it is putting many American consumers at risk, because the cost of newsprint has now skyrocketed. The U.S. cannot meet its own demand.

If these duties remain, the Crofton mill stands to lose hundreds of good-paying, union jobs, and the benefits of the resource industry that forms the bedrock of regional economies.

I will outline a few points on what Catalyst means to my local community of Crofton.

Catalyst Paper Corporation is BC Hydro's largest consumer. If that company were to fold or have any of its operations shut down, it would be a huge loss to provincial revenues in BC Hydro. Catalyst is also a big consumer of waste fibre from local saw mills. In fact, many saw mills depend on Catalyst for a source of revenue, but also as a place where their "waste" can be turned into a value-added product.

The Catalyst mill employs about 570 people, and it pays millions of dollars in municipal taxes to the district of North Cowichan.

This mill that produces about 350,000 tonnes of newsprint each year. It is quite incredible in what it does.

Both by the company and Premier John Horgan in British Columbia have raised concerns about the softwood lumber action plan. In fact, Premier Horgan wrote to the Prime Minister last month. He noted that there was confusion on how to access the program. There was concern that the nature of the programs did not offer support in time to shield against the impact of tariffs. In fact, when I was speaking directly with the leadership of Catalyst, it told me that the current softwood lumber agreement aid package was of "no value" to it.

I go back to the question I raised in February and again in March. What specifically is the government doing with these onerous and unfair tariffs? I would like to have specifics that I can take back to not only the company, but also to the many constituents who depend on this mill. We really want to know that Canada is standing up for this mill and is doing everything it can. I hope the parliamentary secretary can spell that out for me tonight.

● (2410)

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Department of Commerce's decision on supercalendered paper did not comply with the NAFTA panel's decision. We have therefore requested that a NAFTA panel review the determination by the Department of Commerce, and we will be challenging this decision on the World Trade Organization rules. We will always defend our industry and its workers against protectionist trade practices.

I would like to thank the member from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for raising this issue. Our government was deeply disappointed by the U.S. Department of Commerce's decision to impose preliminary anti-dumping and countervailing duties on imports of Canadian uncoated groundwood paper.

British Columbia's forestry products industry is vital to the province and to the communities and workers it supports. Is it important that they have a federal government that is willing to stand up and fight for them, and I would like to reassure my colleague, and reassure those workers, that our government is doing exactly that.

We have repeatedly raised with the United States how unjustified and unfair these punitive duties are. Not only that, but they will have a direct and negative impact on U.S. newspapers, especially those in small cities and towns, and will result in job losses in the American printing sector. These duties are not in the interest of Canadians or Americans.

These investigations are an unwarranted use of the U.S. trade remedy system by a single company, North Pacific Paper, which operates one mill in Washington State. It is not right that one company should cause economic hardship to the whole forest products industry on both sides of the border.

We are making this point directly with U.S. interlocutors. We are particularly aware of the fact that Catalyst, the source of 1,200 jobs in small communities such as Crofton, Powell River, and Port Alberni, is facing high preliminary rates. Our government is working closely with the Canadian companies targeted by these investigations, such as Catalyst. We are arguing our points directly with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. International Trade Commission as part of the ongoing process.

Canada's forest industry sustains good, middle-class jobs and provides economic opportunities for rural and indigenous communities across our country. As such, our government is very much committed to helping our forest industry enhance existing trade relationships and diversify trade with new international markets. We are also working with the affected provinces, very much including B.C., to discuss options to assist exporters facing preliminary duties.

We will continue working to advance the interests of the Canadian forest industry to protect those good, middle-class jobs in so many communities across the country.

● (2415)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the parliamentary secretary's words. However, I go back to the points I raised in my speech: the fact that Premier Horgan's letter to the Prime Minister mentioned that there is confusion on how to access the softwood lumber action plan and that there is a concern that the nature of the programs will not offer support in time to shield against the impact of tariffs. I also have correspondence saying that the current structure is of no help to Catalyst.

Again, how is the parliamentary secretary's government going to address these specific concerns so that Catalyst can access these programs while we wait for a final determination in August of this year?

**Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson:** Madam Speaker, we are working very actively with the relevant provinces, and very much with British Columbia, with Minister Donaldson and Premier Horgan, on a file that is very important to all British Columbians. Both of us are actually members of Parliament from British Columbia.

The U.S. International Trade Commission will make its final injury determination at the end of the summer, and we are forcefully defending Canada's interests at the ITC. The only right course of action is for the U.S. ITC to make a negative finding and for the U.S. Department of Commerce to revise its final determination and remove fully and entirely these duties.

I can assure the member that our government will continue to actively participate in the U.S. investigation, working with our forest industry, provinces and territories, and communities across Canada. We are working very actively with provincial governments, including Premier Horgan, to defend this vital sector against unfair and unwarranted U.S. trade measures and practices.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 29, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until later this day, at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12:17 a.m.)

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